

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

HOUSE OF COMMONS  
OFFICIAL REPORT  
GENERAL COMMITTEES

Public Bill Committee

## VEHICLE TECHNOLOGY AND AVIATION BILL

*Third Sitting*

*Thursday 16 March 2017*

*(Morning)*

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### CONTENTS

CLAUSE 1 agreed to.  
Adjourned till this day at Two o'clock.

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No proofs can be supplied. Corrections that Members suggest for the final version of the report should be clearly marked in a copy of the report—not telephoned—and must be received in the Editor’s Room, House of Commons,

**not later than**

**Monday 20 March 2017**

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**The Committee consisted of the following Members:**

*Chairs:* † JAMES GRAY, JOAN RYAN

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|---|---|
| † Baker, Mr Steve ( <i>Wycombe</i> ) (Con)                                | † Malthouse, Kit ( <i>North West Hampshire</i> ) (Con)        |
| † Brown, Alan ( <i>Kilmarnock and Loudoun</i> ) (SNP)                     | † Marris, Rob ( <i>Wolverhampton South West</i> ) (Lab)       |
| † Burden, Richard ( <i>Birmingham, Northfield</i> ) (Lab)                 | † Matheson, Christian ( <i>City of Chester</i> ) (Lab)        |
| † Doyle-Price, Jackie ( <i>Thurrock</i> ) (Con)                           | † Prentis, Victoria ( <i>Banbury</i> ) (Con)                  |
| † Foxcroft, Vicky ( <i>Lewisham, Deptford</i> ) (Lab)                     | † Selous, Andrew ( <i>South West Bedfordshire</i> ) (Con)     |
| † Fuller, Richard ( <i>Bedford</i> ) (Con)                                | † Snell, Gareth ( <i>Stoke-on-Trent Central</i> ) (Lab/Co-op) |
| † Hayes, Mr John ( <i>Minister of State, Department for Transport</i> )   | † Stewart, Iain ( <i>Milton Keynes South</i> ) (Con)          |
| † Hendry, Drew ( <i>Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey</i> ) (SNP) | † Tugendhat, Tom ( <i>Tonbridge and Malling</i> ) (Con)       |
| † Knight, Sir Greg ( <i>East Yorkshire</i> ) (Con)                        |   |
| † McDonald, Andy ( <i>Middlesbrough</i> ) (Lab)                           | Ben Williams, Farrah Bhatti, <i>Committee Clerks</i>          |
|   | † <b>attended the Committee</b>                               |

## Public Bill Committee

Thursday 16 March 2017

[JAMES GRAY *in the Chair*]

### Vehicle Technology and Aviation Bill

11.30 am

**The Chair:** I welcome the Committee to line-by-line consideration of the Bill; I hope we have a pleasant and uncontroversial time. Perhaps I can lay down a few rules straightaway. I tend to the conservative—with a small c, of course—side on such matters, so I will apply the same rules of dress and conduct as we have in the Chamber. In particular, if anybody's phone goes off, they will be banished from the room with no further ado, so please ensure that they are turned off.

We have one or two new Members with us, so if the Committee does not mind, I shall give a short seminar on how we will conduct our business. You have the list of amendments in front of you; it will be available in the room in all events. You will see that amendments of a similar nature and subject are grouped together. Any Member who has put their name to the lead amendment in the group may speak to move it. I hope that is reasonably clear. After that, other Members can catch my eye and speak in favour of or against an amendment. Any Member may speak to an amendment more than once. For the sake of time, that might not be encouraged, but Members are perfectly entitled to speak more than once if they so wish.

At the end of a debate on a particular group, I will call the Member who moved the amendment to speak again. Before they sit down, they have to tell me whether they wish to withdraw the amendment or press it to a Division. If any other Member wants to press other amendments or new clauses in a group, they should let me know informally—by passing me a note or telling me—and I will make that possible. I shall work on the presumption that the Minister wishes to move all the Government amendments.

For those who are new to Committee work, it is important to remember that the amendments are not voted on in the order in which they appear on the selection list or are debated, but in the order in which they appear in the Bill. An amendment may well be grouped with a later clause, so it will be voted on when we get to that clause during the ordinary process of the Bill.

We will probably not have many stand part debates—the debate that happens on a particular clause—as the preference is to debate the clause with the amendments instead. Occasionally, if we have not had that opportunity, I may suggest that we have a stand part debate, but such debates often take up time. I hope that is all reasonably clear.

#### Clause 1

LISTING OF AUTOMATED VEHICLES BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE

**Andy McDonald** (Middlesbrough) (Lab): I beg to move amendment 17, in clause 1, page 1, line 10, at end insert—

“(1A) The Secretary of State must consult on and publish the criteria that they will use to determine whether, in their opinion, a motor vehicle is designed or adapted to be capable, in at least some circumstances or situations, of safely driving themselves without having to be monitored by an individual.

(1B) The Secretary of State may not change the criteria until further consultation has taken place with vehicle manufacturers, insurers and other such persons as the Secretary of State considers appropriate.”

*This amendment requires the Government to consult on and publish criteria for the definition of “automated vehicles” that will be used by the Secretary of State.*

It is a pleasure to serve under your chairmanship for the first time in this Committee, Mr Gray—although, we were together at the evidence session on Tuesday. I am delighted to speak to the Bill generally, as well as to my amendment, because we are now entering the age of automation, which has the incredible and immense potential to liberate many people who are excluded by dint of age, skill, capacity or ability. It heralds a new era of inclusivity for personal transport and can address geographical, social and economic isolation.

The economic dividends of the transformation in our personal transport arrangements, in terms of air quality and climate change, could be immense, as could the industrial and technological advances. I am thinking particularly of the potential road safety benefits, the impact on our national health service and the health dividends, and the reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads.

This is an exciting era, and the idea of us entering into a discussion about automated vehicles is terribly exciting, until we realise that part 1 of the Bill is about insurance. To some degree, we seem to be coming at the issue from the wrong end of the telescope, but we will have to put all the exciting stuff to one side for now and concentrate on the framework. *[Interruption.]* Yes, insurance is riveting, and it is right that the Government have sought to set out a framework to enable the sector to develop. On that logic, it is the right thing to do.

I thank the Minister at the outset for his approach to the Bill. As you rightly say, Mr Gray, we find ourselves in largely uncontested territory—not exclusively, but very largely—and a great deal is to be welcomed. I thank the Minister for his approach, his co-operation and his assistance in preparing for the sitting.

There are times when we have to be detached from our technology, as you rightly said, Mr Gray, and there are times in our daily lives when we want to be removed from it, so I was a little disappointed that an email was sent to me at 9.02 pm last night with the policy scoping notes, which I did not look at until this morning. They are enormously helpful and they speak to the amendment, but I rather wish we had them a little earlier. I just make that gentle point.

The amendment would require the Government to consult on and publish the criteria for the definition of automated vehicles that are to be used by the Secretary of State. That goes right to the heart of what an automated vehicle is. We are asking for that consultation and publication of criteria because it is crucial for manufacturers, vehicle owners and insurers to know whether they are making, buying, loaning on or insuring on an automated vehicle, and whether the scope of the legislation applies to their vehicle.

In Tuesday's evidence session we heard that the insurance industry welcomed the Government taking on the responsibility to say what an automated vehicle is, so providing clarity, but we have concerns that the Bill as drafted leaves the Secretary of State with total discretion as to what qualifies as an automated vehicle. We have therefore tabled the amendment to provide greater clarity and to ensure that relevant persons and organisations—stakeholders, as we sometimes call them—would be sufficiently involved, allowing that to inform the Secretary of State's list of automated vehicles.

**Sir Greg Knight** (East Yorkshire) (Con): Will the hon. Gentleman not accept that, on reflection, his amendment is otiose? Surely it beggars belief that the Secretary of State would not consult. Any good Secretary of State must consult in such circumstances.

**Andy McDonald:** It is also about the publication of criteria; we have to arrive there and there has to be a journey to get to the establishment of the criteria, and we could explore how we might share some consensus around that. I do not suggest for one minute that Secretaries of State will rush off and include on their list of vehicles devices that are wholly and utterly outwith the contemplated legislation, but it is useful to consult on and establish the criteria against which we judge automated vehicles. I hope that will become clear from the rest of my contribution, but I am grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for his intervention.

The significant production of automated vehicles is still some years away. We are preparing the ground for an environment that we know will come but does not yet exist. However, there has already been an increase in assistance systems and partial automation introduced over the years to support drivers. The Bill assumes a clear distinction between advanced driver-assistance systems and fully automated driving technology in UK policy and legislation. As such, there is a need for collaboration between the Government, manufacturers, insurers and consumers to develop a viable and practical system of classification to identify when a vehicle is deemed to be automated or autonomous.

The clause requires the Secretary of State to "prepare, and keep up to date, a list of all motor vehicles that...are or might be used on roads or in other public places in Great Britain, and...are in the Secretary of State's opinion designed or adapted to be capable, in at least some circumstances or situations, of safely driving themselves without having to be monitored by an individual."

By introducing a requirement for the Secretary of State to consult on the criteria used to reach that opinion, the amendment would ensure that all automated vehicles were covered by those criteria. The requirement for the criteria to be published would provide greater clarity for all concerned.

**Rob Marris** (Wolverhampton South West) (Lab): Is my hon. Friend aware—the right hon. Member for East Yorkshire might be, because he is sometimes referred to, perhaps unfairly, as a petrolhead—of whether the current homologation criteria for vehicles on the road are published?

**Andy McDonald:** If I knew what "homologation" meant, I might have a chance. My goodness, we get an education here.

Because we are entering new territory, we need to agree what we mean by automated vehicles. We have it fixed in our minds that the definition covers only end-to-end journeys, but there are also journeys of which parts are under the direct control of the vehicle and not of the person who occupies it. We already have autonomous braking systems—the Committee explored those on Tuesday—and our shared view is probably that they fall outside the definition of an automated vehicle, because they do not cover every function; the person occupying the vehicle is still required to intervene. There are also devices to ensure that drivers do not stray into another lane. Those are all welcome assistance measures, but they do not fall within the definition of an automated vehicle as I understand it. I do not think that it is asking too much to suggest that we go through the process of establishing the criteria.

**Richard Fuller** (Bedford) (Con): The hon. Gentleman draws my attention to the word "monitored" in clause 1(1)(b). It is an interesting word to use in relation to whether a vehicle is autonomous. I can monitor myself driving but not be in control. Is not the essential point whether the individual controls the vehicle? I wonder whether he has any observations about the word "monitored".

**Andy McDonald:** The hon. Gentleman raises a valid point. That is indeed the word used, but I find it a little difficult to reconcile with the rest of the Bill, because it might suggest some engagement and involvement. He is right to point that out, and I am sure that the Minister will want to pick up on his well-made observation.

The Opposition believe that the additional clarity provided by the amendment would help to create a more reassuring environment that encouraged the development and uptake of automated vehicles. The amendment would also prevent the Secretary of State from changing the criteria without further consultation. It has been pointed out that such consultation would happen in any event, as a matter of course, but I suggest that it would be helpful for that to be made abundantly clear in the Bill. The amendment would ensure that the criteria used remain up to date and as practical as possible in a fast-moving world, and that they provide a device to allow all interested parties to engage fully.

Finally, let me refer to our helpful scoping notes, for which I am grateful. We are told that in practice the Secretary of State would need to have regard to whether the vehicles or types of vehicles have met international or domestic standards on the safe functioning of automated vehicles. That is very useful, but I suggest that it is merely a part of the criteria that could be established. We need to think about the whole range of functionality that automated vehicles can deliver. Although that information is helpful, it is not the complete picture, which is why my amendment suggests a consultation and the establishment of criteria.

11.45 am

Finally, we are told that the power of the Secretary of State will be exercised by preparing and publishing a list. As it is an administrative, rather than legislative power, there is no associated parliamentary procedure. Through my amendment, I am suggesting that there should be. I commend my amendment to the Committee, and I trust that it can secure the confidence and support of the Minister.

**The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Mr John Hayes):** It is a delight to serve under your chairmanship, Mr Gray. I look forward to our consideration of the Bill in Committee being electrifying, but never too highly charged. The shadow Secretary of State made some important initial comments about why the Bill matters, and with your indulgence, Mr Gray, I will speak to that before moving to the specifics of his amendment.

The shadow Secretary of State is right that the changes the Bill envisages—in some ways, I hope it facilitates change and allows it to continue—are significant. I was delighted that he highlighted the effect that those changes might have on the wellbeing of all kinds of people who in future could travel, but who cannot travel now. He made a profound point about the effect those changes will have on their lives. It is true that many infirm, elderly and disabled people will have the ability to travel in a way that they do not have now, with all the opportunities that brings. In a way, for me that is perhaps the most exciting part of the journey that we are all travelling on as a Committee; on the Government side, we are travelling as a Government; and as Parliament, we are travelling as the representatives of those people. I am delighted that he chose to highlight that point in particular in his introductory remarks.

Most men—by “men”, I am using the inclusive generic term—know that they cannot dictate the future, but some think that they can define it. Can we prepare for an unknown future? What we certainly can do is lay the ground to ensure that we can embrace what we think will be efficacious and resist that which might not be. That is our responsibility. The tightrope we have walked—the balance we have tried to strike in the Bill—is doing sufficient so as to continue to support developments in this technology while simultaneously not constraining those developments and not trying to determine or dictate what that future might look like. As the shadow Secretary of State said, it is far too early to say exactly how this technology will develop, or indeed at what pace.

We have consulted widely on these matters, as the Committee knows, and I continue to discuss them regularly with those involved in the motor industry. The discussions we have had suggest that changes might happen sooner than many people expect. The shadow Secretary of State was also right to say that they might take the form of a series of incremental changes, rather than a single step. In a way, that is what we have enjoyed over the past few decades. Cars have become increasingly likely to assist us in the way we drive. We have already talked about parking assistance, which is a common feature of most of the cars we buy. A combination of the technological changes that assist drivers in that way, and the data that are now available—through things such as real-time data, sat-nav and other technology—has changed the driver’s experience in a way that would have been unimaginable only a few decades ago. The essence of the changes that the Bill envisages are altogether different in their effect.

I will turn to the amendment, which will allow me to explore some of the other points that the hon. Gentleman made—sorry, the right hon. Gentleman.

**Andy McDonald** *indicated dissent.*

**Mr Hayes:** He is honourable, certainly, and in my estimation, deserving of so much more.

Clause 1 compels the Secretary of State to create a list of automated vehicles. That is to provide clarity to industry and the public on which vehicles will be captured by the provisions—we need to define what kinds of vehicles are affected by the Bill. The Secretary of State will do that by applying the definition in subsection 1(a), to which the hon. Gentleman referred, and subsection 1(b). In those provisions we see the means by which the Secretary of State will create that list.

It is important to define the difference between driver assistance and automation, as the hon. Gentleman asked us to do. We are defining automated vehicles—the hon. Gentleman asked for this clarification—as those vehicles that have the capability to drive themselves without human oversight or intervention, for some or all of the journey. An automated vehicle might not be automated for the whole of the journey, but for at least part of it, and perhaps for the whole, it will not require the person driving it to intervene.

**Rob Marris:** On that point, the Minister will be aware—I think he referred to it—that for a number of years there have been cars that will park themselves. Under the definition he has just given, those cars would be counted as automated vehicles. That may be what the Minister intends, but to many people a vehicle that simply parks itself would not really be an automated vehicle. Is he saying that self-parkers will be on the list?

**Mr Hayes:** No, they would not be on the list because, although it is true that the cars we typically buy now might well have assistance with parking—I mentioned them a moment ago—the oversight of that remains with the driver. Automation is the transfer of that oversight or responsibility.

It is important to point out that the driver retains responsibility for the performance of the vehicle, but will not have oversight of the functions that are automated. I suppose that in the world we are now imagining, it would be possible for a driver to be doing something else while the car was being driven.

The best parallel here, and one with which we are all pretty familiar, is aeroplanes. When we fly on a jet, as some of us no doubt have and will again, for some of the journey the plane will be switched to automatic pilot, although it is true that the responsibility remains with pilots and co-pilots. We are quite familiar with that; the plane will essentially be flying itself. As I said, that means that the capability moves from the pilot to the plane, and in the case of a car, from the driver to the vehicle. So the vehicle will become capable of driving itself in an automated way.

**Andy McDonald:** Can I just take the Minister back to the intervention of the hon. Member for Bedford about the word “monitored”? I am trying to think through what is required of a driver when a vehicle is going through its process of self-parking. If we are saying that that individual has to be on notice and ready to intervene should something occur, I am not sure that the word “monitored” properly addresses that concern. If the word “intervention” was used, I could see how things would stack up. It really comes back to the criteria that I am talking about, and for the avoidance of any doubt, I am not in any way suggesting that there should be control over the list itself; it is the criteria by which vehicles are adjudged to be automated. I hope that is helpful.

**Mr Hayes:** I think that is helpful in this sense: it is certainly true that there will need to be some accessible, comprehensible and consistent means by which we define “automation”. However, the hon. Gentleman is right that, if my analysis is accepted, these things will change iteratively and that there will be a series of further technological developments that we cannot predict with accuracy.

Of course it is true that the Secretary of State, in drawing up this list, would need, as my right hon. Friend the Member for East Yorkshire said, to continue to listen, consult and be involved in how that definition of “automated” might evolve. It is hard to know quite what an “automated” vehicle might look like in decades to come, and it is right that we should be sufficiently flexible to take account of technological changes.

Nevertheless, for the insurance purposes, which, as the hon. Gentleman said in his opening remarks, is where we start with this matter, it is really important that we are clear about the core definition of what automation looks like, and it is this matter of capability—the capability of the vehicle to drive without the intervention of a driver or other human being.

**Richard Fuller:** I just want to get absolute clarity. The example that my right hon. Friend the Minister provided of the automatic pilot would be an example where oversight would not be required but might be provided by the pilot. Therefore, is that an example of something that would fall within or without scope of being “automated”?

**Mr Hayes:** Inasmuch as any vehicle had the capability of being piloted—driven—without human intervention, yes. I do not want to go too far with this metaphor, but in the circumstance that I set out, the responsibility for the vehicle—the plane or car—remains with the pilot or driver. There is a balance to be found between the function of the vehicle and the responsibility for the vehicle, which I think is a parallel with the example I gave. That was the hare I set running and my hon. Friend is now encouraging it to run faster.

**Richard Fuller:** Will the Minister therefore accept that including in this definition the principle of oversight and not restricting it to control provides a much wider ambit for what this list will be required to provide? Indeed, we would find situations where self-parking vehicles would be included in the list, because it is so hard to prove that someone at the time would not have a duty of oversight.

12 noon

**Mr Hayes:** The critical thing is that the definition we are trying to draw now, which is very much in line with our consultation with the insurers and the manufacturers, provides sufficient clarity to allow us to move forward and enable developments to continue, sure in the knowledge that the insurance framework will be much as it is now in terms of the protection it offers, which is what this part of the Bill deals with. The clarity that the Bill will bring does not for a moment obviate or try to anticipate technological changes of the kind that the hon. Member for Middlesbrough was flirting with in his intervention, but it provides enough of a baseline and a solid level of assurance for the technology to continue to develop.

Moving on to what the hon. Gentleman said, the only scope the Secretary of State will have to list a vehicle is whether or not it meets the definition that I set out—in other words, whether the vehicle has the capability of driving itself without human oversight or intervention for some or all of the journey. That is unlike driver assistance systems, however advanced, because automated vehicles do not require the driver to be involved in the driving process at all times. If a car does not meet that definition, it will not be included on the list.

That enables us to be very clear about the reason vehicles need to be on the list—namely, that the types of vehicle that are defined will not be covered by our current insurance framework and therefore need a new type of insurance product. We heard in the evidence sessions that the insurance industry is working on those products and is confident that they will be developed and will provide the guarantees of safety and security that we want for all drivers, but they will not be exactly like the insurance products that are out there now. They will deliver the same kind of safety, but they will not be the same products.

**Richard Burden** (Birmingham, Northfield) (Lab): I am not sure that it is really quite as clear as the Minister says. The Bill states that the vehicle has to be capable, at least in some circumstances or situations, of safely driving itself without having to be monitored by an individual. If the insurance industry, the Minister and everybody else agrees that automated parking and autonomous emergency braking do not fall into that category, there is no problem, but people may disagree because the fact is that in those two modes the vehicle is capable of driving itself and does not require an intervention of any kind or monitoring by the individual. It is the same for lane control. We tabled the amendment because the criteria that need to be applied to the definition will probably change over time as the technology develops, so there will need to be ongoing dialogue about what should or should not be included in the definition. Does it not make sense to say that there should be ongoing consultation not on the list but on the criteria?

**The Chair:** Interventions are getting a little too long.

**Mr Hayes:** I think there is an implicit need to continue the dialogue that the hon. Gentleman seeks. It is absolutely right that the spirit in which, as the shadow Minister recognised and welcomed, we have gone about our business so far continues to inform these developments. Bluntly, my right hon. Friend the Member for East Yorkshire is right that any responsible Government and Secretary of State would want to work on that basis. It is important we are clear at the moment about the definition so that we do not inhibit the development of further insurance products and thereby the further development of the technology. It is true that at some future point we may need to return to those matters, but the core definition we are trying to establish here is sufficient, as we heard from the insurance industry when it gave evidence, to allow it to continue its work.

We are not giving unbridled powers to the Secretary of State. Once we have established a clear definition, the Secretary of State will have no discretion to exclude a vehicle that meets the definition. The Secretary of State cannot be capricious about which vehicles are on the list and which are not; the vehicles will be defined by the

[Mr John Hayes]

criteria and by the definition. The Secretary of State will not define which vehicles are on the list, but will take responsibility for publishing the list. Conversely, if a vehicle does not come within the definition, it cannot be included. The power is merely, in that sense, an administrative power, not a discretionary power. The Secretary of State cannot, as I say, pick and mix the vehicles on the list outside the definition we are trying to set here in law. If he or she could do so, insurers simply would not have the confidence to develop the products that they need to.

**Rob Marris:** The Minister talks about developing products. Although the problem may be to do with that, part of the problem is the elasticity of the definition. The Minister referred earlier to some or all of a journey being self-driving, and it says in the definition and in the amendment that cites this part of the definition, “in at least some circumstances or situations”.

I think that is the problem. He is trying to include in the definition part-time automated vehicles. Either they are fully automated and safe for me to be on the roads with those vehicles whizzing up and down, or they are not. This part-time stuff fudges it all and is a big problem.

**Mr Hayes:** I am not sure that that is true and a reflection of what is likely to happen. If I am right—the Opposition said this at the beginning of the debate and I acknowledged and agreed with it—and others are right, too, that the changes are likely to be incremental rather than sudden, so that the changes are likely to build on technological developments that have happened in the past, then it may well be that we move to a circumstance where vehicles are developed that can be switched to autonomous mode and then switched out of it. That is more than likely to happen—in fact, it is probably inevitable.

The issue is not whether a vehicle can be autonomous; it is about what we do when a vehicle is autonomous. From an insurance point of view, being clear about what happens when a vehicle is autonomous and making sure that the insurance policy is consistent and, as I said, provides the safety and assurance that is needed is the fundamental here.

**Kit Malthouse** (North West Hampshire) (Con): The Minister is making a strong point, but I have a couple of things to add. First, there is a misunderstanding about self-parking cars. I do not know how many Members have one, but I do. All self-parking cars at the moment require the driver to control both the throttle and the brake. There is no car on the market at the moment that does those things as well. All it does is control the steering.

The Minister is right about technological development. I happen to drive a car that I am able in certain circumstances to move into a semi-autonomous mode of driving, but I have to keep my hands on the steering wheel. That seems to be a requirement of the industry. There is surely an element of self-regulation. The insurance industry will make a decision about a particular technology and whether it is willing to insure it. As we heard in the evidence that was presented to us—

**The Chair:** Order. Interventions should be shorter.

**Kit Malthouse:** As we heard in the evidence presented to us, the industry has already made a decision about automatic braking and emergency stops. We get cheaper premiums—

**The Chair:** Order.

**Mr Hayes:** On that point, my hon. Friend the Member for Bedford asked David Williams, the chair—I call him the chairman—of the Automated Driving Insurers Group, who spoke for insurers:

“Within its scope, does this Bill do enough to position the UK as a global leader in vehicle technology? If not, what is missing? If you do not have the time to answer, maybe you can email me.”

That was very courteous of my hon. Friend, but David Williams did not need to email him, because he was able to answer very concisely:

“From an insurance perspective, yes.”—[*Official Report, Vehicle Technology and Aviation Public Bill Committee*, 14 March 2017; c. 16, Q28.]

It should reassure the hon. Member for Wolverhampton South West that insurers clearly think that the Bill will allow them to move forward with developing the products that I described.

I want to be as reasonable as I can, so I emphasise the point that we want to continue discussion and consultation on all these matters as we move forward. That is absolutely right; the Opposition reasonably ask for it, and it is an assurance that I am happy to give. I emphasise yet again that getting clarity at the beginning that is sufficient to satisfy the insurance industry, as clearly we have done, is really important in order not to inhibit further development. As though that were not enough, I can offer further reassurance: hon. Members know that the approval of vehicles for sale and use will ultimately be subject to the international standards of the United Nations economic commission for Europe, as well as our own domestic standards. All vehicles must be safe to sell, use and drive. There will be an underpinning set of safety standards, both domestic and international.

**Rob Marris:** The Minister is being generous in taking interventions. Perhaps he will correct me, but as I understand it, a vehicle has to have a homologation certificate in order to be used on the public roads in Britain. Are the criteria for homologation certificates published?

**Mr Hayes:** The certification process for all vehicles is common, in that they must meet proper safety standards. There is no suggestion that the safety standards for these new kinds of vehicles will fall below that level—that would be preposterous. The hon. Gentleman can have an absolute assurance that the Government will ensure that those standards are applied. I am very happy to make available the information he seeks about the standards we apply; that seems perfectly reasonable to me.

**Rob Marris:** And will it be published?

**Mr Hayes:** Yes, I am more than happy to write to the hon. Gentleman and other Committee members about the standards that underpin the process.

**Rob Marris:** And will that be published?

**Mr Hayes:** I take it as read that what I write to the Committee will be available. Our standards are well established, but the international standards for automated vehicles are bound to evolve and develop. I can certainly write to the hon. Gentleman to set out what I have said here, but I would not want to anticipate what the international standards might look like in the future. He would hardly expect me to do so, and I am not sure that it would do me, or him, any favours.

12.15 pm

**Rob Marris:** It is to do with publishing the criteria. May I give the Minister an example? The best-selling vehicle in the world is the Ford F-150 pick-up, which is not sold in the United Kingdom. If I wish to import one and use it on British roads, I will need a homologation certificate. I am asking the Minister for his assurance that the criteria for such a certificate, in this case for automated vehicles—what will or will not go on the list—will be published. I am not asking him to say now what those criteria will be; I quite understand that he cannot do that.

**Mr Hayes:** I am certainly happy to give that assurance. We will make available to the Committee the standards that are already established. As the hon. Gentleman says, it is important that they are published. I will give a further commitment. As international and domestic standards evolve over time, at the point at which it is appropriate to do so, we will publish those, too. I want a consistent approach. If that is what he seeks, it is reasonable to do so. In the same spirit, we will consult and certainly publish as much information as possible for the Committee and beyond it.

To develop the argument—I do not want to go on exhaustively, but it is important to set out the core principles at the beginning of our consideration of the Bill—the hon. Gentleman will understand that the standards I describe form the basis of the type approval process that conventional vehicles currently follow, and that of course automated vehicles will follow, too. The same consequent process will happen. Based on those standards, and likely the vehicle's registration document, we expect it to be very clear which vehicles can safely operate in automated mode. As I have said, that is important to reassure the public and others.

**Sir Greg Knight:** Will the Minister give way?

**Mr Hayes:** I was just coming to the exciting conclusion of my remarks, but I will happily give way to my right hon. Friend.

**Sir Greg Knight:** Will the Minister clarify for the Committee what powers he thinks clause 1 gives him? For example, if a vehicle was designed to be driven automatically and is marketed, but then a few months after it has been on sale it is discovered that under certain weather or driving conditions it has a catastrophic failure, would he be able to delist it?

**Mr Hayes:** That is a very good question, which, before I reach the absolute apex of my exciting conclusion, I will answer, with the help of inspiration that is winging its way to me. The standards established for existing vehicles will continue to be used as a matter of principle.

The Secretary of State will transpose the approved vehicles into the list to ensure that our domestic insurance framework is clear about which vehicles need which kind of insurance product, bearing in mind what I said about different products developing to suit different kinds of vehicles.

The essence of my reason for not accepting the amendment with the alacrity that the hon. Member for Middlesbrough no doubt hoped for is my assertion that it is probably an unnecessary step, given the assurances I have offered about our willingness to discuss the matters further as the technology develops, and given the absolute assurance that the Secretary of State will not act in a discretionary or capricious way. It is important to understand that the definition defines the list, not the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State publishes the list and has a function to do so, which he will be obliged to carry out as a result of the Bill, should it become an Act. However, he is not in the business of picking which manufacturers he chooses to list and which he does not; the definition does that job for him. For those reasons, further amendment of this part of the Bill would be superfluous.

I am looking for further clarification—

**The Chair:** Order. The Minister may wish to catch my eye later if he wishes to inform the Committee of any particular matter if he does not have the information now.

**Mr Hayes:** What a good idea. I shall draw my remarks to a conclusion in anticipation of that inspiration.

**Drew Hendry** (Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey) (SNP): It is a pleasure to serve under your chairmanship, Mr Gray. I thank the Minister for the way in which he has engaged so far and for his approach in taking forward the Bill.

The Minister mentioned generic men earlier. I do not come across many generic men, or many generic women either. Part of the problem in our discussion is that there are not many generic cars or vehicles out there. There are of course classifications of different types of vehicles, which is the nub of the matter that we have been discussing this morning. I think that the amendment has merit mainly because it would allow the public to be confident about the take-up of vehicles. At the moment there are far too many unknowns, which is likely to affect consumer confidence. If we are going to take advantage of the enormous potential of the market—some £900 billion—people will have to know what they are buying, what they are getting into and how safe they will feel inside it. I agree with the Minister about opening up the potential for new users, for disabled people and people who are disadvantaged or at the margins at the moment.

I have great sympathy for the Minister's comments—I must say that I was reassured by some of them—about the need for an open discussion on the future technology. Part of our problem with the Bill, particularly with regard to autonomous vehicles, is that we are thinking about the here and now—the current technology—but we do not know what the next level of technology will be. Will flexibility need to be built into some of the classifications? For example, we might need to take account of vehicles with no steering wheels or operator pedals, where users essentially get into a box that is

[*Drew Hendry*]

guided either by a remote software application or by the remote control of another user, somewhere else, who is responsible for its movement. It would be very helpful to get an early acknowledgment of such classification issues that accepted, and indeed made the case for, flexibility in the future. There is a real opportunity to publish initial criteria for classification, which will build confidence. Our key consideration must be looking after the safety of our citizens who operate or are passengers in these vehicles.

I have many other questions, but I will raise them when we debate other clauses. I am greatly reassured by the Minister's tone, but I ask him to take the opportunity to adopt some more clarity at an early point, primarily to give people confidence.

**Richard Fuller:** It is an honour to serve under your chairmanship, Mr Gray, and to have listened to the opening speeches. I will focus on the intent of clause 1 and how it relates to the title and ambitions of the Bill. As you know, it is entitled the Vehicle Technology and Aviation Bill, and, for those of us with an interest in technology, it is that forward-looking word that attracts us. The Bill meshes with the Government's stated strategy of being at the forefront of welcoming technology businesses into the UK, both broadly and in the area of vehicle automation. Both the Opposition spokesman and the Minister alluded to that general principle and the context in which the Bill has been introduced. I raised a point earlier about whether the word "monitoring" is part and parcel of that broader ambition and whether it assists in it, which will certainly be an important consideration for Government Members.

The Minister kindly drew my attention to my question to the chair of the Automated Driving Insurers Group, who replied that, yes, the Bill met the insurance industry's ambitions. I think the Minister was trying to reassure me with that, but I must gently point out that if it had been up to the satisfaction of insurers, Columbus would not have gone to America, no one would have gone to the moon and Steve Jobs would not have created Apple. The confirmation and endorsement of insurers may be a necessary condition, but it is certainly not a sufficient one to meet the ambitions that we have set ourselves.

**Tom Tugendhat** (Tonbridge and Malling) (Con): My hon. Friend makes some good points, but the whole point of insurance is to share risk. It was that sharing of risk that allowed Columbus to go to America and allowed the exploration of the known world. In fact, it was the invention of insurance in these islands that enabled us to create an empire and trade with the world. I feel slightly that my hon. Friend is perhaps aiming at the wrong target.

**Richard Fuller:** I am very grateful to my hon. Friend. I have no wish whatever to demean one of the most important export earners for our country. Insurance is indeed important, but when it comes to the issue of the word "monitoring", what my hon. Friend and other colleagues on the Committee need to work out is the implication of that word—yes, through the context and lens of the insurance industry—for the ability of this country to provide an adequate platform for innovation.

I was trying to think of the implications of the word "monitoring" versus "controlling" for when I am sitting in a vehicle. Surely one of the advantages of the vehicles that we are trying to encourage here is that it is a different type of experience. When someone gets into an autonomous vehicle, that enables different types of things than when they get into a regular vehicle. One must surely be that they have the ability to do other things, because the car is taking them from A to B. However, if the word in the definition is "monitoring", I understand that my time doing other things is now limited, because I have essentially got to be doing what I would be doing anyway, which is monitoring the road, the vehicle, the conditions and pedestrians. I will be spending all of my time monitoring what is going on, even though I am not necessarily controlling what is going on.

**Mr Hayes:** Heaven forbid that I should in any way limit my hon. Friend's remarks, as there is no one I would rather fly to the moon with, and possibly fly among the stars with, than him, but, to be absolutely clear, what I said was that we are defining automated vehicles as those vehicles that have the capability of driving themselves without human oversight or intervention for some or all of the journey—without human oversight or intervention.

**Richard Fuller:** I am grateful, but I fear that I have still not been fully persuaded by my right hon. Friend in this battle between the never-to-be-demeaned insurance sector—the foundation of all human endeavour—and the entrepreneurial spirit. There is a third person in this little equation, which is the driver him or herself. I worry that the perpetuation of the word "monitoring" rather than "controlling" is essentially designed for a substantial amount of risk to be shifted from those two participants and on to the driver themselves. The message may go, "You were not providing sufficient monitoring of your circumstances in this autonomous vehicle."

In this era of innovation, clarity is not only required by insurers and innovators, it is required by those people who create the demand for the product. Therefore, if we are setting up a regulatory structure that in any way takes away from the confidence of people to spend their hard-earned money on an innovation or new type of product, we are backtracking from that commitment. I would like a little more persuasion from the Minister—perhaps not today, but as he is going to write to the Committee prior to Report. Otherwise, I would say that there is a good case for the Government to review clause 1(1)(b) and replace the word "monitored" with the word "controlled".

**Mr Steve Baker** (Wycombe) (Con): My hon. Friend has made an interesting case, which I have listened to carefully, but the word "controlled" is even narrower than the word "monitored". Putting that word in instead would imply that vehicles listed by the Secretary of State might need to be monitored but not controlled, which would defeat the case he is making, so I am a bit confused about his end purpose. I have sympathy with what he seems to be suggesting, but the solution he proposes seems to defeat his argument. Will he be clear on what it is he wants to deliver in the clause?

**Richard Fuller:** I am grateful for my hon. Friend's intervention, as always. We are wrestling with what is the most adequate and fair basis for defining this new

set of vehicles, without trying to pick technologies or understand what might happen. The basis for that has to be what the remit is of human behaviours that will be differentiated by this new set of vehicles. There are a set of human behaviours aligned to monitoring, which will then define whether someone is in or out, and a set aligned to controlling, which will define whether someone is in or out. My argument is that a case can be made that a definition for these types of vehicles based on an expectation of control by the individual is clearer and provides a sharper allocation of responsibility between insurers and manufacturers, without passing the buck on to uncertainty about the responsibilities of individual drivers. That is what my questions to my right hon. Friend the Minister aim to understand.

The small point I wish to check with my right hon. Friend the Minister is whether he can advise how prototype vehicles will be treated? I listened to my hon. Friend the Member for Milton Keynes South talk about going around Milton Keynes in a prototype vehicle. Will the Minister advise how prototypes will be handled and insured in this era of innovation? We can anticipate that future field trials will be much more extensive. How will they be treated?

I agree with the Minister that the amendment does not really take us very far, and I do not think it is worth supporting. However, clause 1(3) says:

“The Secretary of State must publish the list when it is first prepared and each time it is revised.”

He may not know—I may be asking how long a piece of string is—but has he had some indication of what the regularity or frequency of that updating may be? Has the industry advised on its expectations?

12.30 pm

**Rob Marris:** It is a pleasure to serve under your chairmanship, Mr Gray. My remarks will be more of a stand part nature; I hope that is in order, after your injunction at the start of the sitting. I anticipate that you may decide, using your discretion, not to have a stand part debate, because we have thoroughly gone around the block on these issues.

**The Chair:** That is precisely the case.

**Rob Marris:** I have a few points for the Minister. I have considerable sympathy with the suggestion from the hon. Member for Bedford that control is a better verb than monitor in these circumstances. We will all be aware, from our advice surgeries if nothing else, of the vagaries and multiplicities of human behaviour. I know hon. Members will laugh, but there is a risk that people may be sitting in—I am trying to be neutral—a vehicle that they think is automated but is not fully automated and it crashes and they will say, “I was just making a cup of tea and the car just ran into the car in front; I thought it was one of those self-driving thingies because it was on some separate list.” I think that is, in part, because the Minister is trying to be flexible in his definition because of what may or may not happen with the technology. Clause 1(1)(b) refers to “at least some circumstances or situations”.

I think that is the nub of the problem. Those words are understandably repeated in amendment 17.

He also said, when reading from the scoping document, “some or all of the journey”

when referring to what one might call part-time or partially automated vehicles.

**Kit Malthouse:** Presumably in those circumstances, anybody who is in an automated or autonomous vehicle will still have a duty to understand its capabilities before they get into it. If there is an incident in which they have misunderstood or have not availed themselves of the information to understand the vehicle that they are getting into, they would be negligent, in legal terms. There is no attempt in the Bill to remove the notion of somebody being negligent once they enter some kind of vehicle.

**Rob Marris:** Of course, the hon. Gentleman is right; we will deal with negligence later when debating clause 3. However, that is precisely why I referred to the vagaries of human behaviour. I will give him an example of language, how we use it and how it can be misunderstood. There is a well-known incident involving someone who was maintaining an aircraft. It said in the manual, when inspecting a piece of the aircraft, to remove that piece, to inspect it, and, if faulty, to replace it. That is what the individual did; they took it out, inspected it, found it was faulty and replaced it back into the aircraft. That is the language and those are the vagaries of human behaviour. In terms of the legal technicalities, the hon. Gentleman is quite right, but I am talking about human behaviour, which is sometimes different. Fortunately for me, though not the individuals involved, I made a living out of that, because I was a personal injury lawyer and people did strange things.

**Mr Baker:** I do not doubt that the hon. Gentleman is relating a tale from his direct experience that is therefore true. I just say, as a chartered aerospace engineer, that the terminology was always very clear—taking a component out and placing it back where it had been was refitting, not replacing. Replacing was taking a component out and putting another back.

**The Chair:** Order. I am reasonably content to allow something of a stand part debate, but you must refer to the clause itself or amendment 17. We are drifting rather wide of the topic under discussion.

**Rob Marris:** I thank you for that guidance, Mr Gray. I was trying to say—perhaps not very clearly—that in both the amendment and the Bill, the wording “in at least some circumstances or situations”

is problematic. I agree with the hon. Member for Bedford that the word “monitored” is potentially problematic, too.

More generally, does the Minister envisage a completely separate list, or will the list that is created under the powers in clause 1 simply be a subset of the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency database, just as the DVLA database currently has a subset dealing with hybrid vehicles and vehicles that, for London congestion charging purposes, have carbon dioxide emissions of 75 grams or less per kilometre? It is an administrative question.

My second administrative question is this. Does the Minister envisage that a vehicle on the list that is created under clause 1 will have separate registration plates? Will there be a separate method of indexing so

[Rob Marris]

that when I drive down the road in my non-automated vehicle, I know whether I am behind an automated vehicle? I do not suggest one way or the other whether that would be advisable, but it is an issue that needs to be looked at.

If the words

“in at least some circumstances”

are not removed, will the list that is created have two sections—one for partially automated vehicles and one for fully automated vehicles? In human terms, driving terms and insurance terms, those are two different sorts of vehicle. Partially automated vehicles are, to use the Minister’s analogy, those that one can put on automatic pilot for part of the journey but not the whole journey. Those differ from the kind of vehicle that we started out talking about, which, for example, a person with almost total visual impairment could safely be transported in alone because it is fully automated.

Will there be two separate lists for fully automated and partially automated vehicles, and will there be separate registration plates?

**Iain Stewart** (Milton Keynes South) (Con): It is a pleasure to serve under your chairmanship, Mr Gray. I shall make a few brief remarks and, I hope, a helpful suggestion to the Minister.

I have listened carefully to the debate, particularly the discussion about cars with driver-assist technology. Essentially, we are looking at three types of vehicles. At one end there are regular vehicles that have park assist, adaptive cruise control and all those things. I am fairly clear from the discussion that those are not automated vehicles—the key phrase is “driver-assist”—so they are not covered by the clause. At the other extreme there are vehicles that will be fully automated, which probably will not have steering wheels, pedals and the like. Those vehicles are similar to the prototype vehicle that my hon. Friend the Member for Bedford referred to, in which the Secretary of State for Transport and I whizzed around Milton Keynes shopping centre, somewhat to the bemusement of shoppers going about their business.

The critical vehicles are those that fall in between—those that can be driven as a regular vehicle but where, under certain circumstances, the driver is able to press a button or pull a lever that moves the vehicle fully into auto-control, where they have no part whatsoever in its operation. I envisage a scenario in which we end up with road trains on motorways, with a chain of cars—perhaps 10 or a dozen—all following one another. We do not yet know how that technology will evolve. That to me is the critical definition. Following on from the comment from the hon. Member for Wolverhampton South West, does the Minister envisage that the list he is creating will make that distinction between wholly and partly automated vehicles? That might go some way towards clarifying the matter.

As many hon. Members have said, it is important that we get the parameters established now. They need to be flexible enough as the technology develops, because none of us knows exactly where this will lead. I am comfortable that the clause does give the Secretary of State that power, but it might be helpful to sub-divide the list in the way I have suggested.

**Andrew Selous** (South West Bedfordshire) (Con): I shall be brief, given the amount of discussion we have had so far on this point. I have listened carefully to the arguments for and against monitoring or control. I will make a suggestion to the Minister, who I know will reflect carefully on everything that has been said. After the word “without”, it might be more helpful to put the words, “the driver being responsible for driving the vehicle”. That would cover fully autonomous vehicles and semi-autonomous vehicles because of the earlier wording in paragraph (b). That might help clarify what the Minister and Secretary of State are trying to achieve.

**Mr Hayes:** The semantic point is an interesting one, and of course we always reflect on such technical matters; they are important and can be of the value that was described. I will deal with the last point raised and then with all the others.

The hon. Member for Wolverhampton South West always speaks with knowledge and authority on such matters. On number plates, I have not actually given any thought to what he suggested—he rather acknowledged that he had not, either. He said that he had come to no conclusion or view of any kind about it. As he said that, I thought that nor had I. I would say that the matter has not been decided. It would have to be based on engagement with the public because we would want to take a public view, very much in the spirit of the consultation that I described earlier. It is certainly something we would want to discuss at length. As he was speaking, I could tell that he was thinking, as I am, about the pros and cons. Identification of a vehicle could be very positive, but it could also be other than that. It is an interesting point to which we will give further consideration, with the requirement for further consultation and public engagement.

To answer the question about the list, it is an administrative list. On the issue of insurance, let us be clear that this part of the Bill is about insurance. We have ranged widely, Mr Gray, and you have been generous in allowing us to do so. We have been able to explore matters beyond the amendment. That is not uncommon at the beginning of consideration of a Bill, as it helps to set the tone and establish the context. I say no more than that, apart from emphasising that this is about insurance.

Representatives of the insurance industry not only answered my hon. Friend the Member for Bedford clearly, but went on to say in the evidence session:

“I think the Bill does have the balance right. It focuses on the road user...the Bill has to focus on the safety of road users rather than insurers and manufacturers.”—[*Official Report, Vehicle Technology and Aviation Public Bill Committee*, 14 March 2017; c. 15, Q27.]

Essentially, the insurance industry has concluded that the Bill as drafted provides road users with the safety they need. That will consequently allow the industry to develop a variety of appropriate products as we move forward with this technological change. There is certainly a need for further discussion and clearly an acknowledged need for further work on its part, but the industry is saying that this is a good starting point and sufficient for its needs.

Ezra Pound said:

“A man’s hope measures his civilisation”.

I hope that my civilisation will be confirmed by my hope. I still hope to provide the necessary assurance to all members of the Committee.

12.45 pm

On the question of whether people can add to the list—I have no doubt that manufacturers will want to submit claims that their vehicles should be added to the list—the Secretary of State remains the means by which the list will be published, but the definition is the key. If a vehicle does not meet the definition, it will not make the list, and if it is found not to meet the definition, it could be removed. The Secretary of State does have the power that we have talked about, because he is ultimately responsible for the list's publication and therefore its validity.

On the issue of driver-assist, which has perpetually been raised in our discussion, it is important to point out that existing insurance products work perfectly well for vehicles that offer driver assistance. Many of us probably drive such vehicles, and the policies that apply to them are not wildly different from those that apply to vehicles that do not have driver-assist. There is not an issue around the existing technology. It works, people know what it does, and the insurance industry is confident that it can insure on the basis of that understanding of what it does. We are talking about a different range of products for a very different kind of technology. There is no blurring of the distinction between what the insurer will do with a driver-assist product and what they will do with an automated product. They recognise that they will have to develop a very different set of insurance models.

**Drew Hendry:** The Minister is making a good point about reacting to the industry's needs and ensuring it is in a good place to do this. However, does he not feel that it is important to take into consideration the outcomes for citizens when looking at this? This is not just about how the insurance industry copes; it is about how we stimulate confidence about safety in the public.

**Mr Hayes:** That is a well-made point. The list's purpose is not solely to provide the platform that insurers need to continue to develop appropriate products. It will also be available for consumers and manufacturers; in a sense, that is why it is here. It is in part to do what I said, but of course it will be a public document. People will know what vehicles are on it and they will be able to scrutinise it. It is in law not just for the practical purposes I described, but for the public purposes that the hon. Gentleman advertises. That is going to be necessary, because there will be uncertainties. We will no doubt talk about behavioural change and how people anticipate the effect of this technology, and there will be a need to provide reassurance about safety. That is why I emphasised safety so strongly this morning, and why it is underpinned by what we are doing in the Bill. I accept that there is work to be done in ensuring that the list provides the reassurance that he and I both seek.

The hon. Member for Wolverhampton South West and I exchanged views about tests. If there is a safety issue with one of these vehicles, it will be recalled. Let us be clear that there is no suggestion that these vehicles will be subject to anything less than rigour in the way they are tested. As I said in response to my right hon. Friend the Member for East Yorkshire, they can be removed from the list.

An interesting point was raised about prototypes. I suspect that the insurers will have a view about the policy they might offer in respect of a prototype vehicle. They do now, as right hon. and hon. Friends will know. There are particular insurance products for particular kinds of prototype vehicles—which often restrict their use, by the way. When a very new product is being introduced, it is probable that the manufacturers will designate it in that way and that the insurance industry will respond accordingly. However, it is a well-made point; I may make further inquiries about it and write to the Committee, because I think such an important area requires further clarification. I have drawn from discussions and consultations we have already had with the insurance industry, and I suspect that it is as I describe: existing policy and practice in respect of prototypes will probably be reflected in this particular area of technology.

My hon. Friend the Member for Bedford took us to the stars. Too many Frank Sinatra lyrics at this early stage in our consideration are probably superfluous—as I said, we could play among the stars together. He raised an interesting semantic point about clause 1(1)(b) and the question of whether a vehicle is monitored or controlled. I will ask more about it and, when I write to the Committee, I may write on that, too, with the Chair's agreement. I was considering it as my hon. Friend was speaking—as good Ministers should, because we learn from these Committees, do we not?—and I will return to it.

I am mindful of the need not to be too narrow in what we say, but to be sufficiently clear. It is important to strike a balance between absolute clarity and a specificity that would hem us in too tightly in all of these matters. We are trying to strike that balance—to walk that tightrope, in a sense—but I hear what my hon. Friend says and I will write to the Committee on the subject.

I think that hope is an important part of the work of politicians, Governments and members of the Committee. In that spirit, I hope that the combination of absolute assurances I have given—on consultation; the willingness to listen and learn from what has been said; the need for absolute clarity, and the stated and restated determination to deliver it; and the reassurance we have had from the industry that it is comfortable with where we have got to and that it is right and sufficient for its purposes—will not merely be a matter of tone, to quote the hon. Member for Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey, but also a matter of substance. After a healthy but long debate, although not exhaustibly so, I hope that the hon. Member for Middlesbrough will withdraw his amendment.

**Andy McDonald:** We have had a thorough and useful discussion. I am grateful to the hon. Member for Milton Keynes South for taking us back to the days of “Tomorrow's World”, Raymond Baxter—a few hon. Members will remember—and James Burke by talking about motor trains on the motorway. We did not think that would happen; it has only taken more than 40 years to get to this position. He is right to draw that out.

I am grateful to the Minister. I actually thought at one point that he was speaking in support of my amendment, but I think what he actually did was give me the assurances I was seeking, and I am grateful to him for that. He has assured us that the conversations

*[Andy McDonald]*

will continue and that that will be a continuous feature, and importantly, that there will be a publication and that he will write to the Committee on the criteria. I therefore beg to ask leave to withdraw the amendment.

*Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.*

*Clause 1 ordered to stand part of the Bill.*

*Ordered, That further consideration be now adjourned.*  
*—(Jackie Doyle-Price.)*

12.54 pm

*Adjourned till this day at Two o'clock.*