

## Changing attitudes towards vulnerable road users

Some vulnerable road users (VRUs) are viewed negatively by other road users. This is often termed *out-group bias*: As car drivers might not necessarily identify with road users who choose to ride motorcycles, bicycles or even horses, they find it easier to hold negative views about these VRUs. As negative thoughts can lead to rash actions (e.g., close passing) it is important to tackle this bias, though there are very few instances in the literature of successful interventions.

This talk will report on a study that attempted to change car drivers' attitudes towards cyclists and horse riders, using empathy-evoking videos of cyclists and horse riders in their day-to-day lives to reduce out-group bias. The results demonstrated that the videos improved explicit attitudes and intended future behaviours (regarding passing distance and passing speed), at least in the short term.

Current attempts to improve attitudes towards VRUs will also be discussed, including the development of videos that provide drivers with mindfulness techniques to reduce frustration or anger when there is a VRU in the road ahead, and the use of VR hazard perception clips to improve car drivers' and motorcyclists' understanding of the difficulties they each face when they have an unexpected interaction. Together, these different approaches demonstrate promising methods for reducing out-group bias and improving the safety of vulnerable road users.

**SPEAKER'S BIOGRAPHY:** David Crundall is a Professor of Psychology at Nottingham Trent



University, specialising in Traffic and Transport Psychology. He gained his PhD in 1999 investigating eye movements in novice drivers and has since published over 100 academic papers and book chapters in the field. He has conducted research on a wide range of driving-safety topics, working with the UK Department for Transport, the DVSA, EPSRC, ESRC, the Road Safety Trust, The RAC Foundation, and many corporate customers. He is the Chair of the Road User Working Group of the Parliamentary Advisory Council on Transport Safety (PACTS), an associate with UNROEd with responsibility for NDORS course content, and is co-founder of Esitu Solutions, a company dedicated to bringing hazard perception to the fleet market.