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*TRANSCRIPT OF "FILE ON 4" – LORRY DRIVERS*

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*REPORTER: Allan Urry*

*PRODUCER: Rob Cave*

*EDITOR: David Ross*

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THE ATTACHED TRANSCRIPT WAS TYPED FROM A RECORDING AND NOT COPIED FROM AN ORIGINAL SCRIPT. BECAUSE OF THE RISK OF MISHEARING AND THE DIFFICULTY IN SOME CASES OF IDENTIFYING INDIVIDUAL SPEAKERS, THE BBC CANNOT VOUCH FOR ITS COMPLETE ACCURACY.

“FILE ON 4”

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#### ACTUALITY IN TRAFFIC OFFICE

URRY: The daily juggling act for British hauliers, keeping nearly half a million heavy goods lorries on the move.

#### ACTUALITY IN TRAFFIC OFFICE (cont)

URRY: More than a billion tonnes of the products on which we all rely travel on Britain’s roads each year. That’s 80% of all domestic freight, from tomatoes to televisions and delivery deadlines grow ever tighter, some say there’s never been a tougher time in road haulage.

TRAFFIC OFFICER: The fuel’s gone up nearly 70 pence a gallon and it’s got to the point now where it’s really really tough. The margins have been whittled away slowly but surely year after year.

URRY: The slim profit margins of reputable hauliers are also under attack by those prepared to cut corners. There’s growing concern that truck drivers are being pushed too hard, it’s causing death on the roads. Police are warning of an



URRY: codenamed Late Arrival is producing worrying findings. Chief Superintendent Geraint Anwyl says some truckers are so exhausted they're actually asking to be arrested.

ANWYL: Well we had a number of months ago now a South African driver and he was falling asleep at the wheel and he was literally pleading with us to stop him. But he told us that if he chose to stop himself then he would not be employed again by that company.

URRY: So that was his only way of getting off the hook was it to call the police and basically ask to be arrested?

ANWYL: Yes and that isn't an isolated incident, we'd say that half of the vehicles on average that we're stopping on the late arrival operation are driving in excess of their hours or they've got tachograph offences or even using forged tachographs.

URRY: And how worried are you by that?

ANWYL: We're very worried about it because it's a major event waiting to happen.

URRY: On the night File on 4 joined operation Late Arrival, it was business as usual.

#### ACTUALITY WITH POLISH DRIVER

URRY: Inside, working alongside PC Nick Power is Simon Jenkins a senior traffic examiner from the Department of Transport's Vehicle and Operator Services Agency, or VOSA as its known. He's the expert at analysing the charts. The Polish driver who's working for an Irish firm is in trouble.

JENKINS: He started at just after 5 o'clock this morning. He's driven a total of nearly 13 hours today since 5 o'clock this morning and its now 11 o'clock

JENKINS cont: at night and he's still driving. That's over 16 hours that he's been on duty for and out of that 16 hours he's driven for a total of 13 hours. The maximum he can drive in a day legally is 10 hours so clearly he can't comply with either of those so he'll certainly be being parked up here and he'll have to stop here for the night and take his rest that he should have taken.

URRY: In the last 12 months police have seen a big increase in the numbers of foreign drivers. Chief Superintendent Anwyl, who heads the National Roads Policing Intelligence Forum, says some are part of a freewheeling labour force the authorities have little control over.

ANWYL: There are an awful lot of drivers some of whom are very responsible coming in from the former Eastern block countries at very high standards of driving but there is this black labour force of whom we know nothing. We have no idea as to the validity of their licenses and they appear to be driving regardless of the requirements of the law regarding rest hours.

URRY: Why are some of these foreign drivers more prepared to break the law do you think?

ANWYL: We think that there's a degree of compulsion by some disreputable companies where they're being forced to drive longer hours. They're probably being paid less money, they're further away from home and they're wanting to get on, complete the journey and get back home.

URRY: Senior Traffic Police throughout Europe are on the alert for these suspect operations and any gang masters who may be running them. There's a chronic shortage of UK truckers. Up to 80,000 more are needed during seasonal peaks, and this explosion of foreign drivers is contributing to an expanding pool of freelancers operating in Britain. Many are being hired out by Driving Agencies. The good agencies operate under a code of best practise agreed with trade partners in the industry. Roger King, Chief Executive of the Road Haulage Association, says they're vital to keep the trucks moving.

KING: The reason why hauliers use agency drivers is because the economics of the industry do not permit companies to carry staff where there isn't work for them, even for a short period of time. And that means that during peak operational periods they will want an agency driver and some operators will be almost dependent upon agency drivers.

URRY: The impression we get is that there's an increasing reliance on the agency sector.

KING: Yes I think that would be correct. There is a growing requirement for agency drivers again driven to a certain extent by the working time directive when their own employees have run out of working time.

URRY: But regulations and enforcement are weak leaving the door open for the marginal operators and cowboys. Jeremy Hey, a leading fleet safety consultant, has carried out surveys for those who use agency drivers. He finds they are 4 times more likely to have an accident than regular staff.

HEY: We were looking at a haulage company with various depots around the UK and what we found was that agency drivers were causing more accidents than anybody else in this particular sector. And that's been reflected over the last 2 years in other studies we've done at the same time that agency drivers actually are causing higher accident rates and obviously accident rates in UK are paramount in terms of there's 3000 people dying a year and 250,000 people being seriously injured. So what you're finding is this whole business pressure which is now causing people to take on agency drivers, not vetting them properly, not training them properly, not assessing them properly and the accident rates are going up. But what do they do if you're trying to run a business you just have to fill the van or the lorry with someone who can drive for you.

URRY: Their priority is to get the wagon out of the gate.

HEY: Yes, the pressure they're under as a business and what they're paid for is the get the lorry for example from point a to point b as quickly as possible within a tight deadline. That pressure means that if they find someone who can drive and who is qualified to drive they'll put them in regardless of their competency.

URRY: Even if the agency driver is competent, this arms length relationship between driver and customer leaves plenty of scope for abuse. File on 4 has had exclusive access to a police investigation in which both drivers and the agency which booked them out, colluded to work illegally.

#### ACTUALITY IN DERBYSHIRE

URRY: Two years ago on a warm August Sunday morning, a cycle race was underway here along the A50 dual carriageway, close to the Derbyshire Staffordshire border. This is a very good road and a preferred choice of many lorries delivering in the area. On that day, one was driven by Sean Emery, an agency worker who it turned out was at the ragged edge of exhaustion. He'd been with a truck for 41 hours out of the previous 57. The longest period of sleep he'd had in three days was just three hours. For Emery's recklessness a cyclist, an off duty policeman, was to pay with his life. Sgt Jim Allen, a traffic officer from Derbyshire police, investigated the killing.

#### ACTUALITY IN CAR

ALLEN: They cyclist was hit around about here and the truck dealt him a square blow from behind. He died of multiple internal injuries but I would say almost certainly they were dealt by the lorry rather than the landing.

URRY: Because this was a cycle race this driver would of passed other cyclists before the fatal collision.

ALLEN: We know for certain he passed other cyclists before the collision. We've taken witness statements from several of them. One gentleman was riding along and he felt a wave of pressure suddenly well up behind him and pushed him over the white line and towards the verge because the lorry was so close to him. And another cyclist had a very near miss with it, the truck passed within inches of his right shoulder and he described it to me as the nearest miss he'd ever had.

URRY: The driver, Sean Emery fell asleep at the wheel. He was arrested, and soon police widened the scope of their inquiry, investigating the agency he was working through, FDS Stoke. According to Detective Superintendent John Briggs

URRY cont: FDS Stoke was making a fat profit by intentionally booking illegal hours for drivers like Emery, who did it for the money.

BRIGGS: He was bragging at one point that he was able to earn £1,000 a week. Well if you worked out what his hourly rate was at I think he was at the most he was on was about £9 an hour you know your talking 110hrs a week, which what I know about drivers hours I know that's way beyond what he can legitimately work. Should he wanted to have driven 24hrs a day with the assistance of this particular agency he could have done so if he'd got the physical capability to do it.

URRY: So the longer they drive the more money they make?

BRIGGS: Absolutely it's as simple as that and the demand for drivers is there and it is driving that type of mentality. One particular driver, not the driver involved in the crash itself, had driven for 29 days without a day off and in that time had driven for 40 shifts and a shift can be anywhere between sort of 6 and 15hours. Now if you work that out I think there's one period in there where he actually drove for 55 hours virtually without stopping for a number of different companies back to back to back, each declaring no doubt to the driver are you fit to drive? Yes. Or in some cases we found out no real questions asked.

URRY: Two weeks ago, at Nottingham Crown Court, a director of FDS Stoke, Brian Alcock, from Ashbourne, pleaded guilty to causing the manslaughter of the cyclist John Needham. The driver, Sean Emery has also pleaded guilty to causing death by dangerous driving. They'll be sentenced next month. Twenty others who drove for the agency were fined a total of £22,000. One was banned from driving for 3 years. Yet some of the UK's biggest names were using these men to make deliveries. Emery was behind the wheel of a truck owned by the supermarket ASDA when he killed the cyclist. He'd driven for them the previous day as well. Police discovered Emery had lied about his hours on declaration forms the supermarket insists on before handing over the keys of a lorry. But, according to police, ASDA office staff did not check the declarations properly or question Emery effectively. Had they done so Superintendent Briggs believes his lies would have been obvious.

BRIGGS: ASDA were one of the few companies who had tried to introduce a system whereby the driver will have to declare what driver's hours they'd got available to show that they'd got some legal right to drive from that moment onwards. But in fairness that wasn't properly regulated and then other light companies of a similar sort of size and ASDA's a huge concern had got no process whatsoever.

URRY: But when you say well and properly regulated what do you mean?

BRIGGS: Well when I say that, the driver would turn up at the depot, he'd speak to the transport manager who'd ask him to fill a form in that asked him when his last day off was, how many hours that he'd driven this week and the driver could then give whatever version he wanted to suit the drivers needs to allow him to drive legally so to speak. And then the following night he goes back and he speaks to a different transport manager who doesn't compare the form to the form that was filled in the day before because the sheer volume of drivers coming in and also the bureaucracy didn't quite meet itself. So if you put two forms together its quite clear that this person is lying, so those two things didn't get put together by ASDA and out he went on the fateful journey.

URRY: Although the supermarket had not committed any criminal offence, its system of checks and balances hadn't worked. ASDA told us:

READER IN STUDIO: The driver responsible was not an ASDA employee. We were as shocked and horrified as anyone to find that he'd lied. We have fully reviewed our actions following the accident. Whilst we know this is of little comfort to Mr Needham's family, we will do everything we can to ensure we are not duped again in this way.

URRY: Supermarkets are among those which rely on agency workers. Just in time deliveries have reduced warehousing, keeping costs down for the retailers, but putting more pressure on those who do the haulage. The British Retail Consortium, which represents supermarkets, agrees that drivers from agencies are needed to keep supplies moving. But the BRC's Director General, Kevin Hawkins, argues that there are careful checks.

HAWKINS: The big retailers and indeed the small ones too take particular care to use reputable agencies, to use agencies who use independent third parties like the Freight Transport Association and other independent agencies to actually monitor tachograph records and ensure that drivers are staying within the legal limits in terms of the hours.

URRY: How well are they actually doing that? It's easy to say they take a great deal of care but how well do they do that?

HAWKINS: I mean as far as I'm concerned and the evidence from our members are that it's in their own interests to see that these things are done. Now if you have a driver who wants to flout the law, for whatever reason, it's very difficult to stop them.

URRY: But it's not just the driver in some of these instances, it's the agencies themselves.

HAWKINS: Well I am not saying that every agency in the industry is conducted responsibly. There are agencies in this field, shall we say, who are not too fussy about how they operate and that stems from a basic lack of regulation as to who enters and who operates in this field.

URRY: But isn't it the case that supermarkets are forced to use these people further down the supply chain somewhere to backfill because there's a shortage of drivers?

HAWKINS: No, supermarkets are not forced to use these people.

URRY: Well in effect to keep things moving...

HAWKINS: There may be occasions when they have to use somebody they wouldn't normally use, that may well be the case. But I mean this is a very competitive business and of course there are times, when thanks to either the weather, or to some other development in the industry that you get a surge in demand, you have to move

HAWKINS cont: things quickly, you have to fill a gap and that's when you go further a field for agency drivers than you'd want to do.

URRY: The police investigation into the FDS agency found it had 66 clients. In addition to ASDA they included some of the countries biggest transport companies, one of which provided large scale haulage for another leading supermarket. Sergeant Jim Allen says he found few meaningful checks among those who'd used FDS drivers.

ALLEN: When I was out on the road pulling lorries over I was looking for old lorries, unmarked lorries, foreign vehicles, I wasn't looking at large firms with good reputations and good resources and I never expected that their drivers or the drivers of those trucks would be committing offences so I never looked at them. If you speak to my colleagues in traffic policing we just didn't know that this was going on, but when you realise that behind the wheel of these trucks are people that these companies actually don't employ and they've known very little about, if you were able to get in there and know what the drivers were doing you'd be appalled.

URRY: The responsibility for monitoring Employment Agencies in the UK currently rests with the Department of Trade and Industry, but they only have 12 regional inspectors to cover the whole of the sector, a combined workforce of a million people. We asked the DTI how much monitoring of the driving sector its Employment Agencies Standards Inspectorate actually did. A spokesperson told us:

READER IN STUDIO: There have been a number of investigations in a sector which includes driving agencies, but figures are not available until the Inspectorate's annual report is laid before Parliament in a few weeks time.

URRY: Instead the main burden of investigation falls to the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency, VOSA, which carries out roadside checks.

ACTUALITY OF ROADSIDE CHECK

URRY: VOSA has more than 200 traffic examiners and 300 staff to test the roadworthiness of vehicles. Its roadside checks are thorough, but they can't pull everyone over.

#### ACTUALITY WITH LORRYDRIVER

URRY: Its roadside checks are thorough but they can't pull everyone over. Senior traffic examiner Mark Parish says the agency is becoming more intelligence led, but he accepts there are shortcomings.

PARISH: We have certain powers that we can use but they are less than the powers the police have available to them and we can't go and get a search warrant in most cases from a cordon.

URRY: Would you like more powers?

PARISH: It would help us if we had slightly wider range in powers sometimes to force people to hand over information to us. It would certainly help our investigations. At the end of the day we're investigating matters which are matters of road safety. A tired driver on the road driving a wagon is potentially dangerous and that's what we are trying to prevent.

URRY: But according to a Liberal Democrat spokesman for Transport, Lord Bill Bradshaw, VOSA is not just underpowered, it's under resourced, and roadside checks aren't making much impact.

BRADSHAW: The chances of being stopped are just too small. The vehicle operator services agency is able to stop about 2,000 vehicles a week. Well if you spread that out over the whole of the United Kingdom that means that very few lorries get stopped and at night and at weekends fewer still.

URRY: They say that they're being more targeted in their approach now that they've got better intelligence systems which allow them to be a bit more choosy about those who they do pull in?

BRADSHAW: Once they know that somebody is breaking the law they can obviously target them, but I am more concerned about the large number who they haven't, as it were, got in their sights and they've really got no prospect of getting them in their sights.

URRY: Even when VOSA does target operators for checks, vital clues are being missed. A case we've looked at raises serious questions about the rigour of VOSA's investigations. Only when there were fatalities, did the scale of offending come to light.

#### ACTUALITY ON MOTORWAY

KENNY: The amount of traffic that's on here at the moment is normal for the M1 motorway, it is a very busy stretch of motorway. Obviously further north from here you've got the M6 that joins the M1 and it's still a main arterial route for the lorry drivers to get down to London and obviously from there onto the M25 and practically down to the port.

URRY: PC Wayne Kenny, a traffic officer with Northamptonshire police, is driving on a stretch of the M1 which became the scene of the most serious pile up he's attended in his 10 year career. It started when a lorry on the northbound side veered out of control.

#### ACTUALITY ON MOTORWAY

KENNY: He's literally just gone and drifted all the way across. He's then run the tractor unit along the barrier and at some stage it's caught the end of the barrier and lifted the tractor unit up and over. The tractor unit has ended up on the southbound carriageway and the trailer has then been left halfway across the northbound and the southbound.

URRY: For a motorist coming in the opposite direction it's your worst nightmare really.

KENNY: For a motorist coming the other way, really could of done nothing to avoid it. They're presented with this vehicle coming straight onto their side of the motorway and it's something you just would not expect.

URRY: The driver of the lorry, Steven Law was killed, along with two others who'd been on the southbound carriageway. One was a van driver, the other was 41 year old Neil Owen from Melton Mowbray. Mr Owen was also a lorry driver, and a very capable one, according to his brother Paul, who says Neil reacted quickly to try to save the lives of others.

OWEN: Neil had tried to actually close the motorway with his truck that's what the police told us. Looking at the vehicle he'd actually swerved in to close the lane so the lorry had sort of hit the back of his cab to try and reduce the carnage I presume. You know that's what Neil was all about really. I think its cos we'd spent all our lives working in the motor industry and we'd saw the carnage that can happen.

URRY: But he stood no chance himself?

OWEN: No, none at all. Whatever happened it was going to be all over for Neil I think.

URRY: When police investigated they discovered that Steven Law, the lorry driver, who'd caused the crash, had fallen asleep at the wheel. The officer who led the inquiry, Detective Inspector Andy Tennet says he was exhausted because he'd worked too many hours.

TENNET: He'd more or less driven fairly consistently for the previous 3 days without any proper rest and it was far beyond the driving hours that they're actually allowed to drive under regulations.

URRY: How tired would he have been after 3 days of not taking a proper break?

TENNET: Well undoubtedly you know the actions of the accident itself you know speaks volumes. Not only did he fall asleep at the wheel, but he



URRY: When you did find that out then what were your thoughts then?

OWEN: I was more angry then I think than the actual accident because it didn't need to happen, it was no longer an accident. It was murder in my opinion, it was wrong all the rules had been broken and this thing had happened by virtue of that.

URRY: But it's incredible it didn't happen sooner. We've interviewed one of Melvyn Spree's former drivers. We've agreed to keep his identity secret. He says when he applied for the job, it was obvious what Spree was looking for.

ANON: I phoned him and said do you want me to come in for interview he said no I know you and your work record, come down and you can start tomorrow.

URRY: What do you think it was about your work record that impressed him?

ANON: That I really was prepared to break the law and do what I had to do to get the job done. That's what makes this business wrong. When I actually started for Melvyn he didn't have a vehicle for me so we went down to Volvo and we picked up a hire vehicle and he said right when we get back we'll sort it all out, knock your limiter off, knock the tachograph out.

URRY: The limiters are the things that are put in the engine to stop them running past 55/60 m.p.h?

ANON: Yeah...

URRY: But he knew how to get round that?

ANON: Oh yeah, it was common knowledge with all the drivers.

URRY: Once the new driver got behind the wheel, he spent two years virtually living in the cab, working illegally.

ANON: On average it would be an 18 to 21 hour day which would be split at different periods through 4 hours driving, couple of hours tipping, another 3 or 4 hours driving, another couple of hours tipping.

URRY: Tipping's unloading yes?

ANON: Unloading yes, you'd be up and down like a yo-yo all through the night.

URRY: How many days a week?

ANON: Well in all fairness to the guy we did get a day off.

URRY: A day?

ANON: A day yeah.

URRY: And you were delivering fresh produce for the main supermarkets weren't you?

ANON: Yeah we were doing all the main supermarkets all over the Kent area.

URRY: You must have been exhausted.

ANON: It becomes mind numbing. You do a lot of dangerous things, when I should be there driving and concentrating I'm brushing my teeth.

URRY: You brush your teeth when you're driving?

ANON: You brush your teeth when you driving because you don't necessarily have the time to stop or because the boredom is that much, you used to have TV's mounted in the cabs. You'd be watching the latest film or whatever.

URRY: As you're driving down the motorway?

ANON: As you're driving down the M4, yeah. It was just to break up the sheer monotony of it.

URRY: Did you ever feel yourself falling asleep at the wheel?

ANON: There were times especially in the early hours when we used to have to run down from Gloucester back into Kent, I've literally felt my eyes rolling in my head so I'd stop for a 20 minute, half hour power nap. Same as the others would do.

URRY: Eventually, the man pleaded guilty to his offences and was fined. He's still driving for a living but insists he stays within the law now. But could Melvyn Spree and his dangerous drivers have been stopped sooner? Disturbingly, the company, Truckers, and Spree himself had all been successfully prosecuted a number of times in the 2 or 3 years prior to the M1 pile up for similar crimes. When drivers were on bail pending the outcome of tachograph offences, others from the firm would be caught doing the same thing, they were serial offenders. In the weeks leading up to the fatal crash, VOSA even carried out a spot check at the companies premises, examining tachograph records but they missed vital evidence. Janice James, one of VOSA's operations enforcement managers accepts that mistakes were made, but argues that those breaking the law can be good at covering their tracks.

JAMES: If an operator is deliberately trying to evade drivers hours legislation they can be very sophisticated in the way that this is done and just looking at a tachograph record on its own will not always show you exactly what is happening. You have to do the full investigation looking at all the other documentation, looking at all the other evidence that you can as the police did obviously.

URRY: If you know that you've got to go beyond the tachograph records that you mentioned why wasn't that done?

JAMES: We don't do that it in all cases we would only do that if we had specific intelligence, specific information alerting us to the fact that this might be the case. That is a fairly resource intensive investigation.

URRY: But this guy had previous convictions against him and this company didn't he, for breaches of driver's hour's regulations?

JAMES: Yes, but many operators have previous convictions for drivers hours' offences and what we do is to monitor them, as was happening in this case, the examiner went in and looked at the records, as I say, didn't pick up the offences which were there. This examiner has now been the subject of an investigation, he's been sent for re-training, he's under much closer supervision. Nobody's infallible, none of our examiners would claim to be infallible and sometimes we do miss things and nobody's claiming that we always pick up every incident that we should do.

URRY: In a way is it really the fault of your examiner? I take your point about the investigation and you send him off for re-training but the system you are describing seems to suggest that unless there is a major accident or some absolutely cast iron intelligence then people like this outfit can carry on until sadly there's a fatal accident before you go through the books with sufficient rigour?

JAMES: Well if you look at the numbers of operators out there, there just isn't the resources to go through every one of those operator's tachograph records in the kind of depth that you're talking about.

URRY: The Liberal Democrat spokesman for Transport in the Lords, Bill Bradshaw, recognises VOSA's difficulties, and say the government should do more to beef up its enforcement agency.

BRADSHAW: I think they know what to do I just believe they do not have anything like sufficient resources to do the job because it is a very complicated job. And don't forget this agency is responsible for MOT tests on cars, on lorries, buses

BRADSHAW cont: and it also of course runs the vehicle testing stations, it has lots of tasks to do. And the number of traffic examiners and vehicle examiners they employ just really cannot do the job. If government really seriously means to tackle the problems in the industry and the misuse of road safety more resources do have to be allocated. And of course it isn't in the governments objectives except there is a broad objective to reduce road casualties but there are still far too many people being injured by heavy lorries.

URRY: We wanted to interview a minister at the Department for Transport about these issues, but no-one was prepared to appear on the programme. VOSA is able to raise funding for itself. In a statement, the Department told us:

READER IN STUDIO: Funding is received through fees for the services VOSA provide, set at a level which enables them to cover the cost of the work they undertake. In addition VOSA receives around £14 million in funding for special projects.

URRY: For their part VOSA say they are getting more resources over the next two years. They point to more than 5 and a half thousand prosecutions last year, the vast majority dealt with by magistrates but, fines hardly proved a deterrent, averaging only £135. Ultimately the responsibility for the way lorry drivers work rests with the industry which employs or hires them. The Road Haulage Association's chief executive, Roger King says his members try their best to apply high standards and to comply with the law. He points out that operators are already heavily regulated, and that some hauliers and drivers are struggling to keep up with a rapidly changing series of laws and directives.

KING: The amendment to driver's hours that are coming through from Brussels, working time directorate and how you can work within the requirements without breaking the law are extraordinarily complex pieces of legislation and they're not easily understood just simply by reading them. You need case history's, you need tuition courses, we run those courses for our members because we believe you can't learn everything from a book or from a website, you need to learn it in a classroom, if you like and that is what in a very complex industry like road haulage that's what's missing.

URRY: But drivers know when they are tired don't they?

KING: Well they should know when they're tired, yes.

URRY: Well then why do they carry on driving under those circumstances?

KING: One would hope they wouldn't.

URRY: But they do!

KING: Driving a truck and feeling tired is no different from the millions of motorists who feel the exactly the same way.

URRY: Well it is because a road haulage safety consultant has described that process like driving a 44 tonne time bomb.

KING: One car when the driver falls asleep can create as much mayhem on a motorway as any truck as a result of this action.

URRY: True enough but truck drivers are professional drivers and when they have accidents the consequences are often far more severe.

KING: I think you'll find unlike the rail industry, unlike the shipping industry and unlike the airline industry, when there is an accident involving a truck we never get to hear really of what caused that accident so that we can learn lessons from it. If someone is killed on the railway there's an inquiry and we know exactly what happened, eventually, as a result of that enquiry. Four people are killed as a result of a truck crossing over on a motorway, for instance, we never get to know exactly what happened to that truck and why that accident was caused. There's no public enquiry. So as an industry we find it very difficult to learn from the mistakes.

URRY: Oh come on, if drivers are tired at the wheel the lessons are obvious aren't they?

**KING:** No-one actually knows that for sure you see. No-one can say actually say an accident was caused because a driver falls asleep at the wheel.

**URRY:** But that's just what some are now saying. Kent police have told us they've begun to look at lorry crashes more closely, and are now attributing 5 deaths in the last 12 months to tired truck drivers, fatalities which otherwise might have been put down to other factors. Police in North Wales who've found half of all the lorry drivers they pull over are working illegal hours have also been seeing a significant increase in the number of close misses involving lorries, a key indicator of potential accidents. Everyone we've spoken to for this programme agrees there's an urgent need to beef up enforcement, regulate the agency sector more effectively, and toughen the sanctions against those who are willing to put work before sleep and profits before safety.

**SIGNATURE TUNE**