



Motivational factors influencing behavioural responses to charging measures in freight operator sector

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Abstract

The present paper aims to provide insights into freight operators' attitudes with differentiated charges and their opinions about charges' effectiveness and future behavioural responses. Thereby, we investigate whether motivational factors, particularly acceptability towards road charges, play an important role on future behavioural adaptations according to charging schemes. Interview surveys have been conducted and have focused on freight operators and road hauliers' perception and attitudes towards differentiated transport charges and several aspects of differentiation. Results show that a global index of acceptability of differentiation elements is particularly strongly correlated to the likelihood of future behavioural changes in medium terms as well as in long terms. These findings indicate that positive attitudes towards differentiated prices are also in the freight sector relevant for prospective success and effectiveness of pricing measures. Differences in likelihood of behavioural responses between several time horizons imply that effects of differentiated pricing in the freight operator sector affect behaviour more in the long run than in short term. Further findings show that the attitudes of the surveyed freight companies towards various elements of differentiation differ. Results suggest that differentiation elements which relate to changes at vehicle side are rated as more acceptable than differentiation elements which refer to concrete behavioural changes.

Keywords: Price Differentiation; Road pricing; Freight Operators; Acceptability; Behavioural Change; Psychological Reactance.

1. Background

In the transport sector differentiated pricing is increasingly used to influence behaviour in order to manage users' demand for infrastructure capacity. However, there is a likely conflict between the theoretical desirability of highly differentiated pricing structures and the ability and the motivation of users to respond effectively to them.

Bonsall, Shires, Matthews, Maule & Beale (2004) have summarised some of the relevant cognitive aspects for pricing differentiation in transport and have drawn on

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