



Department
for Transport

Huw Merriman MP
Transport Committee
House of Commons
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Dear Huw,

Smart Motorways – Publication of Reports

Thank you for inviting me to provide evidence before your Committee on 30 June 2021. At the evidence session I committed to write to you with the Post Opening Project Evaluation (POPE) reports of the M1 junctions 10-13, M1 junctions 28-35a, and the 'cluster reports' and Emergency Area Width Review. These have now been published by National Highways on its website.

In addition, the Department has now published the ORR Safety Data Review which the Secretary of State commissioned from the ORR on 15 April 2021, along with National Highways' response to the ORR's recommendations. We welcome the findings from the ORR Review, that the ORR found no errors in the underlying calculations, and that all the products and processes reviewed are in line with established practice. This gives reassurance about the conclusions reached in the March 2020 Smart Motorway Evidence Stocktake and the subsequent Progress Report published April 2021, that overall, smart motorways are as safe as, or safer than, the conventional ones.

The ORR has also recommended that further risk analysis tools should be used by National Highways, who have adopted the recommendation along with others, to enhance its approach to safety.

In detail the publications are:

- [Quality Assurance of All Lane Running motorway data](#). This is the ORR's report to the Secretary of State in response to his request for quality assurance of the data and evidence underpinning the conclusions arrived at regarding All Lane Running motorways.

- [ORR Quality Assurance of All Lane Running data: National Highways response](#). This report sets out the National Highways' response to the ORR's Safety Review, and how National Highways plans to implement each of the ORR's recommendations.
- [POPE Report publication for M1 junctions 10-13 hard shoulder running and junction improvements](#). This is the five-year post opening project evaluation of the M1 junctions 10 to 13 dynamic hard shoulder running scheme which opened to traffic in December 2012.
- [POPE Report publication for M1 junctions 28-31 and junctions 32 to 35a all lane running and M1 junctions 31 to 32 controlled motorway](#). This is the one-year post opening project evaluation of the M1 junctions 28 to 35a. It evaluates the performance of the M1 between junctions 28 and 31, and junctions 32 and 35a which are All Lane Running sections of motorway. The section between junction 31 and junction 32, which is also evaluated is a controlled motorway scheme.
- [M6 and M1 smart motorways incident and infrastructure investigations summary report](#). The March 2020 Stocktake committed to review specific sections of the M6 and M1 smart motorway where clusters of incidents on these specific sections have caused concern. This report is about the independent investigation into these sections and the action National Highways is taking in response to the findings.
- [Smart motorways emergency area width review – summary report](#). The March 2020 Stocktake committed to review the width of some existing emergency areas that are less than the current 15-foot-wide standard when measured against the edge of the carriageway. This report summarises the findings from the independent review that National Highways commissioned, including its response and the action it is taking.

I hope that these publications will be of value to your concluding report into the roll-out and safety of All Lane Running motorways.

I would be very happy to meet with you to discuss these reports further. If you would like to, please write to Baroness.Vere_PUSS@dft.gov.uk and my office will arrange it.

Yours,

Charlotte

BARONESS VERE OF NORBITON