

## **Written evidence submitted by Peter Gregory (RSM0035)**

I am a 72 year old male with reduced mobility due to a spinal cord injury. During a normal week I will drive on the M25 between junctions 5 and 6 on six occasions and the M20 between junctions 2a and 7 twice.

My reason for submitting evidence concerns my personal safety in the event of my Motability vehicle becoming stationary in a live lane.

Due to my limited mobility, I can walk for very short distances, getting out of the vehicle is a slow process. I need to open the driver's door fully. Having swivelled on the seat so my legs are out of the vehicle I can then slide off the seat to take my weight on the ground. Making use of my walking stick and holding onto the vehicle I get my balance and stand. Exiting the vehicle is not something I can hurry or perform in a stable manner. Therefore it is not something I would ever contemplate doing into a live lane. So I would be forced to remain in my vehicle.

Even if my vehicle were stationary in the nearside lane I would not be able to manoeuvre myself over the centre console to exit via my passenger door.

The danger I perceive being stranded in my vehicle is twofold:

Firstly is the speed the control centre could activate the lane closure signs to try and protect me. Whilst I would obviously dial 999 to report my situation there are parts of the motorways where mobile signal is not perfect. Also not all stretches of motorways are covered by CCTV or stationary vehicle detection technology.

Secondly I question the effectiveness of the electronic message signs. Anyone who has done a reasonable amount of motorway driving is familiar with the signs warning of an obstruction or pedestrians on the carriageway that display for many miles without incident. I can recall on one occasion seeing a sign warning of fog on a glorious sunny day with a clear blue sky. Sadly I think many drivers regard the signage as of limited accuracy. Due to this it's effectiveness is greatly reduced.

In my circumstances I weigh the benefit of normally greatly reduced journey time through using the motorways against the significant danger should my vehicle become stranded on the motorway. The option of a continuous hard shoulder would greatly reduce the degree of danger.

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