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Our ref: FOI 0000032 HA 139/02/11
Your ref:

Gwyn Drake
Network Operations (East)
Woodlands
Manton Lane
Bedford
MK41 7LW

Direct Line:
Fax: 01234 796013

VIA E-MAIL

May 2008

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000
COPDOCK MILL INTERCHANGE

Thank you for your email to the Highways Agency Information Line requesting information regarding the Copdock Mill Interchange. I have dealt with your request under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

In your email, you ask for the number of overturned lorries at the A12/A14 Copdock Mill Interchange during 2006, 2007 and 2008 to date. I can confirm that we have now completed our search for this information and the details are as follows:

2006	2007	2008
24 July	8 November	18 March
6 December		21 April

You also ask why only one diversion route was given, and suggest that we should have indicated a further diversion route. I assume you refer particularly to the latest incident at this interchange, on 21 April (the date of your request), when an overturned lorry blocked traffic coming out of Ipswich and entering the A14 westbound carriageway or onto the A12 southbound.

Following this incident, we implemented our two Off Network Diversion Routes (ONDR), with the purpose of moving traffic away from the interchange and helping ease the resultant congestion. I have attached maps of the ONDRs which work as follows:

- Traffic moving eastbound along A14 towards Copdock Interchange and wishing to head A12 southbound is diverted off the A14 at Copdock Interchange onto the A1214 into Ipswich, then onto the A1071 and C495 where it then rejoins the A12 at Junction 32b, Bentley Interchange. This diversion is also used, in reverse, if access to Copdock Interchange is unavailable from the A12 northbound (although this was unaffected by the incident on the 21 April)

- Traffic moving westbound along the A14 towards Copdock Interchange and wishing to head A12 southbound is diverted off the A14 at Junction 56, Wherstead Interchange and joins the A137, then the B1070 where it rejoins the A12 at Junction 31, Four Sisters Interchange.

Unfortunately, it is very difficult for us to set out further diversion routes when these events occur. We concentrate on ensuring, as soon as is practicable, that our service providers set out emergency diversions in the immediate vicinity of an incident. They have no legal powers which enable them to move easily through traffic queues and they too are often caught up in queuing traffic whilst making their way to locations in order to set out signing, provide on road assistance, or make good damage - so that a road can be re-opened.

I can assure you that following an incident such as this, our aim is to have the road re-opened as quickly as possible. Regrettably, an incident of this nature just prior to the morning peak, and, at such a busy interchange, takes time to clear and impacts on many journeys.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the Freedom of Information Act, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. We will, therefore, be simultaneously releasing to the public the information you requested, together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context via our website: <http://www.highways.gov.uk>

If you are unhappy with the way we have handled your request, you may ask for an internal review. A leaflet detailing our internal review process is available. If you require a copy, please phone the Highways Agency Information Line on 08457 50 40 30; or e-mail ha_info@highways.gsi.gov.uk. You should contact me if you wish to complain.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

I hope my reply is helpful. If you have any queries about this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

GWYN DRAKE
Divisional Director
Network Operations (East)