

To whom it may concern

Highways Agency
5 Broadway
Broad Street
Birmingham
B15 1BL

28th September 2009

Dear Consultee,

**Consultation on the draft M6 Motorway (Junctions 8 to 10A) (Actively Managed Hard Shoulder and Variable Speed Limits) Regulations 20xx
Birmingham Box Active Traffic Management scheme - Phase 2.**

I am writing to inform you of the consultation on the proposed draft M6 Motorway (Junctions 8 to 10A) (Actively Managed Hard Shoulder and Variable Speed Limits) Regulations 20xx. These draft Regulations are required for the implementation of Phase 2 of the Active Traffic Management ('ATM') scheme operating on the motorway 'box' around Birmingham.

Following the excellent results achieved by the ATM Pilot project on junctions 3A to 7 of the M42, the Highways Agency is now expanding this innovative scheme onto other sections of the Birmingham box. This scheme is part of ongoing work by the Highways Agency to tackle congestion on the motorway and trunk road network and is supported by the Department for Transport's Productivity Transport Innovation Funding.

ATM includes two main components – variable speed limits ('VSL') and hard shoulder running ('HSR').

Phase 2 of the Birmingham Box ATM scheme is concerned with junctions 8 to 10A of the M6 motorway where it is proposed to have VSL and HSR in both directions. This section of the M6 between the M54 at junction 10A and the M5 at junction 8 is one of the busiest stretches of motorway in the whole country and will benefit from an additional lane at busy times, making hard shoulder running an ideal solution.

It is envisaged that VSL will be available on the M6 between junctions 10 to 10A from April 2010, with VSL being possible on the remainder of the Phase 2 section (M6 J8-10) from September 2010. With regards to HSR, it is envisaged that this will become operational on the full section (M6 J8-10A) by Spring 2011 (with testing taking place from September 2010).

During the road works three lanes will be kept open in busy periods to minimise disruption, although occasional evening closures will be necessary.

This consultation for the Phase 2 Regulations follows the consultation undertaken for Phase 1 of the Birmingham Box ATM scheme where four sets of Regulations were made to enable

VSL and HSR where appropriate. This included a section of HSR on the M6 between junctions 4 and 5.

ATM on the M42 between Junctions 3A and 7 has significantly improved traffic conditions. The ATM Pilot project has been proven to successfully reduce congestion and improve journey time reliability for road users. This has been achieved by combining innovative technologies and operational procedures to make best use of the existing road space and to optimise speed limits for traffic conditions. Since going live in September 2006, the M42 ATM Pilot has consistently delivered measurable benefits to the road user and this has been supported by positive feedback from customers, operators and the emergency services. The ATM 12 month monitoring and evaluation report is available on the Department for Transport's website at: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roads/tpm/m42activetrafficmanagement/>.

In order to allow the implementation and enforcement of ATM on the Birmingham Box, there is a need to modify the Motorways Traffic (England and Wales) Regulations 1982 (SI 1982/1163), which these draft Regulations, the subject of this consultation, do.

Purpose of consultation

We invite you to comment on the content of the draft M6 motorway (Junctions 8 to 10A) (Actively Managed Hard Shoulder and Variable Speed Limits) Regulations 20xx. During this consultation period, which will close on 21st December 2009, we would like to encourage any representative organisations, businesses or individuals affected by the proposed legislation to make contact with us and communicate your views.

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, it would be helpful if you could note this in your reply. Please also indicate the nature of the organisation, how many individuals' views are included in the response, and ways in which these views were gathered.

Please send any comments on the content of the draft Regulations in writing (email or by post) to Paul Marsh at the address provided within the Consultation Pack.

Further copies of the Consultation Pack are available from Paul Marsh or on the Highways Agency website: <http://www.highways.gov.uk/business/133.aspx>.

Yours faithfully



Paul Unwin
Senior Project Manager