

# Press release: Making it easier to drive through roadworks – responding to driver feedback

Drivers could be allowed to travel at increased speed through motorway roadworks depending on what day of the week they are travelling, under new plans from Highways England.

Following earlier trials to increase the speed limit through roadworks from 50mph to 55mph or even 60mph, the company is going to test if varying speed limits could safely be operated within a set of roadworks without increasing the risks to either drivers or road workers.

For example the speed could be increased to 60mph on a Sunday if there is less activity taking place, and then brought back down to 50mph when road workers are working within a few feet of passing traffic.

It is also exploring if different speed limits could operate within one set of roadworks. This could mean people commute to work on one carriageway at 50mph as they are nearer the workforce, but drive home on the other carriageway at 60mph as the road workers are further away.

Jim O'Sullivan, Chief Executive of Highways England, said:

People understand roadworks are necessary but are also frustrated by them. At the same time we have to ensure as they drive through them that they, and our road workers, are safe.

So we are always thinking of new ways to improve journeys at the same time as keeping everyone as safe as we can. That is why over the next 12 months we will test changes to the design and operation of roadworks.

We are also working hard to give drivers more and better information about their journeys and to prepare our network for the future, for example the testing of roadside and vehicle technology, so we can continue to keep people, and the country, connected.

During roadworks narrow lanes are installed to provide a safe working area for the workforce. Doing this means as many lanes as possible can remain open to traffic. Currently Highways England operates a 50mph (or lower) limit in narrow lanes but this year they will test whether it is safe to operate at 60mph in certain circumstances. This might include consideration of the width of the narrow lanes or the type of temporary safety barriers that are used.

Locations for the trials are yet to be agreed. Once underway Highways England will monitor the speed of vehicles, flow of traffic, look at incident data

and gather customer feedback to determine its success.

The trials are outlined in the company's [Delivery Plan Update for 2018/19](#), published today.

The Plan sets out how the company is continuing to deliver the Government's £15 billion [road investment programme \(2015 to 2020\)](#).

It also includes:

- making roads safer – planned major road projects and targeted safety schemes are forecast to prevent 200 deaths or serious injuries by 2020;
- improving services to drivers by telling them what is going on in roadworks or traffic jams;
- delivering major road schemes to create extra space for more traffic, ease congestion, and improve the reliability of journeys: during this year eight are due to open to traffic, work will start on six projects and 16 will be in construction;
- maintaining and renewing the existing strategic road network – this will include resurfacing 1,118 lane miles of road surface: nearly the same number of lane miles as the entire M1 carriageway (1,248 lane miles);
- keeping the network open to traffic by maximising lane availability so that it does not fall below 97% in one rolling year;
- working overnight to reduce the impact on road users during the day – last year (March 2017 to Feb 2018) 85% of roadworks were completed overnight, a five per cent increase from the year before (April 2016 to November 2017);
- clearing at least 85% of motorway incidents within one hour to give road users back the lanes they need;
- reducing the impact of the strategic road network on its surroundings, be that on people living near the roads or the environment, such as through the special funds for noise mitigation (free double-glazing), air quality, biodiversity schemes, and investing in new litter bins at motorway service areas;
- recruiting – growing Highways England as a company and working with the supply chain to retain and attract the skills needed. This includes increasing the number of apprentices and graduates.
- looking to the future – continuing to explore and seek innovative approaches which could change the way roads are operated and maintained. Highways England will also progress the work with its industry partners on the research and testing into connected and autonomous vehicles.

## **General enquiries**

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

## **Media enquiries**

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

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# [Press release: Consultation on revised guidance for goods and passenger transport industries](#)

The Senior Traffic Commissioner for Great Britain is today (16 July 2018) launching a [consultation] (<https://whitehall-admin.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/admin/consultations/860037>) on proposed changes to the Statutory Documents.

The publications describe how commissioners apply the law and take a proportionate approach to their regulatory powers.

They are reviewed regularly to provide clearer guidance and show transparency in the way traffic commissioners come to their decisions.

Many of the amendments recognise changes in the law and appeal decisions made by the Upper Tribunal.

13 of the 15 documents have been reviewed, with the changes covering key areas of operator licensing, including:

- Stronger guidance on the practice of 'fronting' (document 1 – good repute & fitness)
- Greater emphasis on the importance of completing applications (document 1 – good repute & fitness)
- Improved guidance around continuous and effective management and disqualification (document 3 – transport managers)
- A new section on support for tribunal users (document 9 – case management)
- Improved guidance on the main occupation criteria (document 13 – small PSVs)
- Updated guidance on what happens when periods of grace expire (several documents)
- A new section on driver employment status (document 5 – legal entities)

Richard Turfitt, the Senior Traffic Commissioner for Great Britain, said:

“The traffic commissioners are justifiably proud of our efforts to modernise. The Statutory Documents are necessarily based on legal developments but few regulators are able to demonstrate the same level of transparency in their decision making as that achieved through their publication.

“Although many of the proposed amendments reflect changes in the law and decisions made at appeal, we want industry to have a chance to review the Documents before we re-issue them.”

The consultation will run from 16 July 2018 to 27 August 2018.

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## Speech: China celebrates 35 years of Chevening

It is absolutely wonderful to welcome you all in celebration of the 35th Anniversary of the Chevening Programme in China and around the world. Today, we welcome members of the Chevening alumni community, friends and colleagues from across the Embassy to meet one another, share memories and achievements, and to celebrate the successes of the UK government's flagship scholarship scheme – Chevening.

Last Wednesday, 1,647 scholars from 138 countries including around 70 from China gathered in Alexandra Palace in London to attend the 2017/18 Chevening Farewell Event, having reached the end of their time in the UK as a Chevening Scholar. During this event, it was announced that the global Chevening alumni community has reached quite incredible heights – this year, Chevening welcomes its 50,000th scholar.

Almost 4,000 of these individuals come from China, consisting of passionate individuals who are engaged in world issues, respondent to global challenges, intent on deepening knowledge and understanding between the UK and China, and who contribute towards the future successes and strengthening of our bilateral relationship.

Ambassador Woodward together with Mr. Lu Qinfang – China's first recipient of the Chevening Scholarship, and families of the Chevening China Alumni Community.

This is a network to treasure and to be proud of, consisting of individuals from every walk of life and region across China. All of you have studied in universities across the United Kingdom. All of you have completed a dissertation. All of you have contributed towards building your own academic communities of thinkers and believers, and all of you continue to contribute to the wider international community of Chevening alumni. All of you are inspiring role models for current and future Chevening scholars and fellows, encouraging them to aspire to the highest levels in their chosen fields. For that, I offer my sincerest and most earnest congratulations and very best wishes for the future.

On August 6, we open applications for the 2019/20 Chevening Scholarship Programme, and on August 24 we celebrate with recently-selected 2018/19 Chevening Scholars before their departure for the UK. For these events and others, we commission your support as recipients of this award, encouraging and empowering exceptional individuals around you to do something special and apply for Chevening.

You will always act as an inspiration for all young people across China, and we welcome your participation in promotional events held all across China.

For more information, please speak directly with representatives of our Chevening Team.

Today, it is our hope that all of you will look back on the last three and half decades with warmth and happiness. We hope that you enjoy your time with friends old and new, and share thoughts and ideas inspired by your time as a Chevening Scholar or Fellow. In reflecting your past triumphs, we may enjoy a collective sense of satisfaction for all the good you have done and continue to do, looking firmly towards a bright future for China and for our bilateral relationship during this Golden Era for UK-China relations.

The Chevening Programme continues to sow the seeds for a Global Partnership that works for all, creating a global community of future leaders that are able to respond to the greatest challenges of our time.

I hope that your experience with Chevening has given, and continues to give you, great experiences, wisdom and knowledge, meaningful and lifelong friendships, and inspiration for a wonderful future.

I would like to finish with a poem that was read to scholars during the 2017 Chevening Orientation by Michael Hastings, Lord Hastings of Scarisbrick CBE, Global Head of Citizenship at KPMG.

### **What is success?**

To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate the beauty; to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded!

Applications for 2019/20 Chevening Scholarships open on August 6 2018 and close on November 6 2018 – applicants can be of any background, representative of any sector and from any region across Mainland China. To learn more, visit [www.chevening.org/apply](http://www.chevening.org/apply) or contact representatives of the Chevening Team in China by emailing [chevening.beijing@fco.gov.uk](mailto:chevening.beijing@fco.gov.uk).

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# Press release: Lockheed Martin and Orbex to launch UK into new space age

- Lockheed Martin to establish vertical launch operations in Sutherland, Scotland and develop innovative technologies in Reading, Berkshire with support from two UK Space Agency grants totalling £23.5 million
- A further £5.5 million will go to British company Orbex to build an innovative new rocket for launch from Sutherland, as part of Government's modern Industrial Strategy
- This builds on awards of £2.5m to Highlands and Islands Enterprise to develop a vertical launch spaceport in Sutherland and a £2m development fund for horizontal spaceports such as those planned in Cornwall, Glasgow Prestwick and Snowdonia
- Government support for launch is the first step towards a potential Space Sector Deal and the development of a national space programme

## Lockheed Martin: UK spaceflight programme

Under the plans, global space leader Lockheed Martin and innovative spaceflight company Orbex will launch rockets into space from the north coast of Scotland.

The grants from the UK Space Agency consist of:

- Two separate grants worth a combined £23.5 million to Lockheed Martin to establish vertical launch operations at Sutherland using proven technology and to develop an innovative new system in Reading for deploying small satellites. Known as an orbital manoeuvring vehicle, this will be the upper stage of Lockheed Martin's rocket and will deploy up to six small satellites to separate orbits.
- £5.5 million to UK-based Orbex to build an innovative new rocket for launch from Sutherland, with the support of British manufacturing operations and supply chains. Their orbital launch vehicle, called Prime, will deliver small satellites into Earth's orbit, using a single renewable fuel, bio-propane, that cuts carbon emissions by 90% compared to hydrocarbon fuels.

The companies will work together with Highlands and Islands Enterprise, which has been awarded £2.5 million to develop a vertical launch site in Sutherland.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

"As a nation of innovators and entrepreneurs, we want Britain to be the first place in mainland Europe to launch satellites as part of our Industrial Strategy. The UK's thriving space industry, research community and aerospace

supply chain put the UK in a leading position to develop both vertical and horizontal launch sites.

“This will build on our global reputation for manufacturing small satellites and help the whole country capitalise on the huge potential of the commercial space age.”

Horizontal launch sites have significant potential in a future UK spaceflight market, which could attract companies from all over the world to invest in Britain. Sites such as Newquay, Glasgow Prestwick and Snowdonia will be boosted by a new £2m fund to grow their sub-orbital flight, satellite launch and spaceplane ambitions.

Chris Grayling, Secretary of State for Transport, said:

“The UK’s space sector is thriving and satellite benefits our lives every day, from banking to transport, and agriculture to entertainment.

“Our Space Industry Act will allow the UK to tap into and develop new commercial space opportunities, with the potential for hundreds of new regional jobs and billions of revenue for British business across the country.

“Today’s announcement is not only exciting for Sutherland, but with industry expertise up and down the country it will drive growth and further regional opportunities in England, Scotland and Wales.”

Britain’s Space Sector has set out ambitious plans to build on its global leadership in satellites and applications using space data to create a hub in the UK for new commercial space services, as set out in the Prosperity from Space report published in May.

The Government’s modern Industrial Strategy identified spaceports as a key economic opportunity and a priority for the UK’s space strategy. The UK is an attractive destination for space businesses and the north of Scotland is well-placed to reach in-demand satellite orbits.

Patrick Wood, Lockheed Martin’s UK Country Executive for Space, said:

“The UK Space Agency’s strategic vision for a world-class launch market will position the nation for a very bright future in space. Lockheed Martin will apply its 50 years of experience in small satellite engineering, launch services and ground operations, as well as a network of UK-based and international teammates, to deliver new technologies, new capabilities and new economic opportunities.”

Chris Larmour, CEO of Orbex, said:

“We’re delighted to have been selected after a highly competitive and detailed process. Orbex is one of the very few private spaceflight companies with credible practical experience in the development of launch vehicles and rocket engines. With the support of this grant from the UK Space Agency, we will soon be launching small satellites into orbit from British soil and

helping to transform the UK into an important hub for commercial space launch operations.”

Following its call for grant proposals in Spring 2017, the UK Space Agency assessed 26 proposals to determine what would deliver the best value for money and strategic opportunity for the growth of the UK space sector.

A number of sites across the UK are developing their spaceport plans and engaging with regulators, demonstrating the scale of the industry’s ambition and confidence in a future UK spaceflight market, which could attract companies from all over the world to invest in Britain. Launches will be regulated under the Space Industry Act 2018.

The UK and US will also soon begin formal negotiations towards a Technology Safeguards Agreement, which will establish the legal and technical safeguards that can support U.S. space launch vehicles to operate from UK launch sites. Attracting US operators to the UK will enhance our space capabilities and boost the whole market.