Press release: £174m M3 upgrade opens to traffic

Cutting-edge technology installed on a 13.4 mile section of the motorway between the M25 and Farnborough sets the speed limit to match conditions, helps spot any queuing traffic, incidents or broken down vehicles, and informs drivers about conditions ahead.

The hard shoulder has been converted to a new fourth traffic lane in each direction, boosting capacity by a third on the vital route between London and the South West.

Since it was created in April 2015, Highways England has completed 16 major improvements, with a further 15 upgrades due to be started or open by spring 2018.

The new style emergency area on the M3 smart motorway

Drivers in this morning's peak period were the first to benefit from the fully upgraded road. Main construction on the project was completed overnight on 30 June, when the fourth lane was available for use with a 50mph speed restriction remaining in place, whilst testing of the smart motorway technology was finalised. Now, the full four lanes are open at 70mph, with the smart motorway technology detecting incidents, actively managing traffic and giving drivers information.

Shaun Pidcock, Director of Highways England's smart motorway programme said:

> This is a significant upgrade for the M3 and will deliver real benefits for the 130,000 drivers who use it every day. We've added 26.8 miles of new lanes to this busy section of the M3 and completely overhauled the technology to give drivers better information to help with their journeys.
>
> Smart motorways create vital extra capacity, improve journey times and maintain our high levels of safety across the network. New technology will make the road more resilient to disruption, improving journeys by using variable speed limits that will help tackle frustrating stop-start traffic and giving drivers better information on conditions ahead.
>
> As well as the smart motorway upgrade, we have also been carrying out the most extensive maintenance on the M3 since it was first built in 1971, fully resurfacing the motorway and its slip roads and restoring it to an 'as new' condition.
>
> I would like to thank drivers for their co-operation and understanding while we've been building this new improved road and hope they enjoy the improved journeys between London and the south

coast.

Smart motorways have been designed to be intuitive to drive on. Normal motorway rules apply: keep left unless overtaking, drive within the speed limit and never drive in a lane closed by a Red X. Even without a hard shoulder, there are safe places to stop every 75 seconds of driving on average.

Work on the smart motorway upgrade started in November 2014. Major maintenance being carried out alongside the project is also substantially complete, but some activities – including the rebuilding of the Woodlands Lane bridge over the M3 near Windlesham – will continue until later in the year. None of this maintenance will require any permanent traffic restrictions on the M3.

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.

Press release: Green light for HS2 as first major contracts signed

From left to right: Sean Jeffery, Executive Director and Chairman of CEK JV Board; Nicole Geoghegan, General Counsel & Company Secretary, HS2 Ltd; Mark Cutler, Balfour Beatty VINCI HS2 Managing Director; Mark Thurston, Chief Executive, HS2 Ltd; Jim Crawford, Managing Director, Phase One, HS2 Ltd; Emma Head, Corporate Health, Safety, Security and Environmental Director, HS2 Ltd; Peter Jones, Executive Director and SCS JV board member; Jérôme Furgé, Align Project Director

High Speed Two (HS2) Ltd Chief Executive, Mark Thurston, was joined by representatives from SCS JV, Align JV, CEK JV and Balfour Beatty VINCI, in a signing ceremony at the company's Birmingham head office. The winning companies, whose names were released by the Department for Transport last month (17 July 2017), will go on to support 16,000 jobs across the UK-wide supply chain as they deliver what will be the biggest investment in UK's transport infrastructure since the building of the motorways.

Welcoming the milestone for the project, HS2 Chief Executive Mark Thurston said:

> HS2 is more than just a railway. The contracts we sign today will provide much needed extra capacity and connectivity between our major cities, but it will also unlock huge opportunities for new jobs, homes and economic development and start to rebalance our economy.
>
> We are determined to deliver the project to new levels of safety and efficiency, with respect for communities, protection for the environment and value for money at the core of everything we do. The contracts we signed today will support 16,000 jobs and generate thousands of contract opportunities within the wider supply chain, spreading the benefits of this investment across the whole country.

A team made up of Skanska, Costain and STRABAG (SCS JV) will build the first section of the route which is in a tunnel between Euston and Old Oak Common and onwards to Northolt. Welcoming the contract award, Peter Jones, Executive Director and SCS JV board member said:

> We are delighted to have been awarded these major contracts by HS2 which follow on from the South Enabling Works Contract awarded last year.
>
> The awards are further testimony to the SCS collaborative approach and our strong track record in applying technology-based innovative solutions in the delivery of large-scale projects.

Align JV, a team made up of Bouygues, VolkerFitzpatrick and Sir Robert McAlpine will build the next stage, including the Colne Valley Viaduct and Chilterns Tunnel. Welcoming the contract award, Jérôme Furgé, Align Project Director said:

> I have worked on many major projects around the world, and find it a special privilege to be working on HS2. This project will require a unique level of collaboration between all of us and the highest industry standards, expected by HS2, will be implemented in order to obtain the very best outcome. My Align colleagues and I are delighted to be part of the challenge to deliver a world-class

> asset to the UK.

The largely rural stages between the Chilterns Tunnel and Long Itchington will be built by a team made up of Carillion, Eiffage and Kier (CEK JV). Welcoming the contract award, Sean Jeffery, Executive Director and Chairman of CEK JV Board said:

> We are delighted to have been selected to help deliver this major infrastructure project and look forward to working in partnership with HS2. Our involvement in this project will enable us to create many new jobs and training opportunities as well as working with a diverse range of supply chain businesses from across the UK.

A team made up of Balfour Beatty and VINCI will complete the route, taking the line north past Birmingham Airport and into the new Curzon Street station in the centre of Birmingham, as well as onward to a connection with the existing West Coast Mainline at Handsacre. Welcoming the contract award, Mark Cutler, Balfour Beatty VINCI HS2 Managing Director, said:

> I am proud that our long-standing joint venture has been chosen to deliver these two important and complex sections of HS2.
>
> This iconic rail infrastructure project will create significant opportunities for the UK construction industry and enable long term benefits in skills, jobs and regional prosperity. We look forward to building on our successful track record of major infrastructure projects, and playing our part in the delivery of HS2.

The contracts are two-stage, with the contractors spending the first 16 months working collaboratively with HS2 Ltd on the detailed design before construction begins around 2018/19. Preparatory work has already begun on the project with geological investigation underway across the route and ecological and archaeological work due to begin soon.

Speech: Protecting confidentiality and improving care: not a zero sum game

Dr Mark Taylor writes about how NDG principle of ‘no surprises’ in the context of genetic and genomic medicine.

Protecting the confidentiality of personally identifiable patient data, and

using that same information to improve care outcomes, is sometimes seen as a zero-sum game. Either the information is protected or it is used to improve care.

During my time on the National Data Guardian's panel I've come to see it a little differently.

There is not always a conflict between respecting an individual's right to exercise control over the use of her information and using information about her to improve care. What matters is whether the use is consistent with what she expects, accepts as reasonable, and whether it respects her wishes. I've come to recognise it to be central to the work of the National Data Guardian (NDG) to ensure that the health and care system has the right controls in place to stop inappropriate uses of data but also to ensure that it is used so that people get the care they need.

The tension, between stopping data flow and making it flow, may be perceived to be acute particularly in case of new technologies and innovative opportunities to deliver high quality health care. Genomics and genetics is a case in point.

In her most recent Annual Report, the Chief Medical Officer (CMO), Dame Sally Davies, makes clear the promise of genomic medicine and science for the UK. In Generation Genome, Dame Sally notes the importance of holding patient data securely and of standards to protect from inappropriate disclosure. She also says that "the emphasis on confidentiality must be balanced against the interests of other family members and broader society, especially where genomic information may prevent serious disease".

Dame Fiona Caldicott, as the NDG, has established authoritative principles to guide appropriate use of confidential patient data for a wide range of purposes associated with the delivery and improvement of care. Dame Fiona has been approached by the genomics and genetics community to help them think through how these principles, such as the principle that there should be 'no surprises' to patients about how their data has been used, may be applied in the context of genetic and genomic medicine.

As none of the previous NDG Reviews specifically considered these challenges in detail, we have been undertaking some work to examine the issues in collaboration with others. As a panel member, I have been supporting Dame Fiona in this work. This work has been very much an attempt to help the genomics and genetics community move forward and is not, at this point, a policy position or official advice from the NDG.

A key challenge we've looked at is whether it is necessary for genetic and genomic data about individuals to be shared more widely than is traditional for medical data in order to ensure that people get the best diagnoses and care. We have heard that when a doctor or scientist gets a result of a genetic test for patient A, they won't necessarily know whether the result indicates a problem or not, whether possession of that gene variant by that person might contribute toward disease or if it could indicate what the best treatment might be for her. This is partly because there are so many possible

gene variations and partly because the significance of a variation for an individual can depend upon other variables. We are nowhere near having seen or understood them all. So where should a doctor start to help their patient?

One place is to look at the records of as many other patients as possible to see if anyone else has ever had the same test result, what their symptoms and other characteristics were, and what treatment they had. So to most effectively diagnose and/or treat patient A, a clinician might need to look at the records of patients B, C, D, E, F etc. This is a challenge to conventional understandings of medical confidentiality – a doctor would not normally be looking at the personally identifiable patient data of people they were not treating. Our thinking has principally been around this challenge. If doctors and scientists need to access data about others to give the best care to the patient in front of them, how can this happen in a way that patients can be comfortable with and maintains trust in a confidential health service?

We've come up with some suggestions for next steps in the paper we have published today. Crucial will be exploring with the relevant patient population how acceptable they consider such use to be. While the opportunities may not always exist within clinical practice for an in-depth conversation, if time and space is made for such a discussiondialogue outside a clinical setting, then do people consider this to be a reasonable use of personally identifiable patient data? If so, then how can awareness of this use be raised to the point that patients in general would not be surprised to learn of it? How do we move toward it being a general expectation?

If it were established that access to personally identifiable patient data by other health care professionals, to help them understand genetic variants for the benefit of the care received by all, was seen by patients to be both reasonable and expected, then there are various ways in which such 'reasonable expectations' might be related to existing Caldicott and legal principles. It also relates to other work on 'reasonable expectations' being undertaken by the NDG and her panel.

We are not the only people looking at this, we know that the genetics and genomics community, NHS England, the CMO, Genomics England and others are also doing this. We look forward to playing our role in ensuring that patient confidentiality is protected consistent with patient expectation and at the same time genetic data may be used to support and improve the delivery of care. That doesn't have to be a zero sum game.

News story: Testing wider rejection

for first registrations

During the trial, we will widen our rejection criteria of first registration applications to cover incorrect fees being quoted, and points that we think our customers should get right first time, such as:

When we reject applications, we will explain why we rejected them.

Between 20 and 31 March, we applied wider rejection criteria to some of the registration applications we received. You can see the areas we trialed for rejection and our reasons for testing in our customer blog from 17 March.

The trial broadly told us that customers were able and willing to adapt to a wider rejection policy, but that they would need a long lead in time to update their processes. The trial also told us the wider rejection has potential to improve our overall speed of service, which we know our customers want.

We now need more information about rejecting first registration applications to clarify which aspects of fees customers have difficulties with, and to improve our understanding of any impacts to customers and our organisation over a sustained period of time. We will, therefore, review the trial in November.

We continue to work with customers to improve the quality of applications we receive. We have met customers to discuss improvements while investigating other ways of helping, such as improving the way we report requisition (a formal request for the applicant to supply the information) data and testing a webinar that will help customers avoid requisitions.

Our customers can avoid requisitions and rejections by following:

News story: Defence Minister announces £3M to be saved as part of a new deal to supply the Royal Navy

Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S), part of the UK Ministry of Defence (MOD), has signed an innovative contract which will supply the Royal Navy with more than 10,000 different types of consumable items – covering everything from fittings and fixtures to pistons and pumps.

Having already announced that the dredging of three million metres of mud at Portsmouth harbour has now given the new Queen Elizabeth aircraft carrier a

clear route into its new home, the Defence Minister said that the award, given to Babcock International Group, will keep the Royal Navy's current and future warships, including the new Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers, supplied with items essential for day-to-day maintenance and operations.

Minister for Defence Procurement Harriett Baldwin said:

> The route is clear for the Navy's largest and most powerful ship to dock at its home in Portsmouth, but even ships as impressive as our magnificent new aircraft carriers need nuts and bolts to keep them running smoothly. This new contract will provide all the supplies our ships and personnel require to be effective on operations.
>
> This also brings the previous contract under one deal, delivering improved efficiencies and highlighting how we are being smarter about support. These efficiencies are ensuring that our £178 million Defence equipment plan is going towards the state-of-the-art kit our Armed Forces deserve.

The new contract is estimated to be worth around £107 million over the next seven years, during which time it is expected to deliver around a million individual items to all current and future Royal Navy vessels. All items being supplied – including electrical cable, straps, small valves, bearings, gaskets, pipes, pistons, pumps, motors and electrical components – are 'consumable' in that they are impractical or impossible to repair.

Two of the contracts announced support the Sampson Multi-Function Radar, operational on board the RN's Type 45 Destroyers. Crown Copyright

The signature secures seven jobs at Babcock International with additional jobs secured at 11 companies across the wider UK supply chain. The contract is also set to generate savings of around £3 million for the taxpayer by bringing together eight older contracts under a new overarching management arrangement. That comes as part of the MOD's commitment to deliver efficiencies and reinvest those savings back into the cutting edge equipment our service men and women need now and in the future.

Companies within the UK supply chain include Liberty Dynamics and Andersalso, based in the West Midlands, Eriks and Edmundson, based in the South West and SPX Clyde Union in Scotland.

Chief of Materiel (Ships) for DE&S, Sir Simon Bollom, said:

> The Royal Navy relies on expert, sustained support through partnerships across UK Defence in order to protect the nation's interests at home and abroad.

> This contract is not only excellent news for the Royal Navy and our partners across the Defence industry, but also for the taxpayer due to substantial negotiated savings and incentivised contract performance.

Whilst speaking in Portsmouth, the Defence Minister also announced that BAE Systems have been awarded contracts worth £72m to support cutting-edge radar systems on board the Royal Navy's ships.

Two of the contracts support the Sampson Multi-Function Radar. Operational on board the Type 45 Destroyers, the radar provides surveillance and dedicated tracking in a single system, enabling the ship to defend itself and other ships in its company from attack.

A five-year contract covering technical support was amongst the announcements. That involves on-board maintenance, spares and repairs management at BAE Systems' Cowes site on the Isle of Wight, supporting 255 jobs. The radar will also have its processing hardware updated as part of the announcements.

BAE Systems has also won the Commander T101 radar support extension project for the next four years. Deployable by land, sea and air, Commander Type 101 radars are in service across UK territories at home and abroad.