

Minute of Meeting of A9 Safety Group
Glenmoriston Townhouse Hotel, Inverness
02 February 2023 – 11:15 to 12:45

Attendees

Name	Organisation
Jenny Gilruth MSP	Minister for Transport
Steven Lamont	Private Office
Stewart Leggett	Transport Scotland – Director of Roads
Morag MacKay	Transport Scotland – Roads Operations
Richard Perry	Transport Scotland – Roads Operations
Marco Bardelli	Transport Scotland – Roads Maintenance
Laurence Campbell	Transport Scotland – Major Projects (via TEAMS)
Michael McDonnell	Transport Scotland – Road Safety Scotland
Matt Millar	Transport Scotland – Communications
David McKenzie	Transport Scotland – Roads Operations (Minutes)
Supt Stewart Mackie	Police Scotland
Ch Insp Andy Barclay	Police Scotland
Insp Donnie MacKinnon	Police Scotland
Insp Andy Mather	Police Scotland
Sgt David Millar	Police Scotland
Anne Stewart	Safety Cameras Scotland (North)
Michael Grant	Safety Cameras Scotland (East) (via TEAMS)
Kevin McKechnie	BEAR Scotland North West
Stuart Geddes	BEAR Scotland North West
Pat Shields	Amey North East
Martin Reid	Road Haulage Association
Daryl McKeown	Perth & Kinross Council (via TEAMS)
Lisa MacKellaich	The Highland Council
Colin Simpson	Cairngorms National Park Authority (via TEAMS)
Neil Greig	IAM RoadSmart (via TEAMS)
David Richardson	Federation of Small Businesses

Apologies

Name	Organisation
Michelle Little	Transport Scotland Road Safety Framework Delivery Officer
Eric Dunion	Safety Cameras North – <i>(represented by Anne Stewart)</i>
Brian Cargill	Perth & Kinross Council <i>(represented by Daryl McKeown)</i>
Eddie Ross	BEAR Scotland North West

Invited but not in attendance

Name	Organisation
Paul White	Confederation for Passenger Transport
Stephen Halleran	FTA / Logistics UK
David Buick	Stagecoach Ltd.

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
 2. Minister's Opening Remarks
 3. Update on Short Term Measures
 4. Route Updates
 5. Update from Group Members
 6. A9 Dualling Update
 7. AOB.
 8. Conclusions and Next Steps
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1. Welcome and Introductions

Welcome extended to all attendees from Minister for Transport, Jenny Gilruth MSP.

2. Minister's opening remarks

The Minister highlighted and acknowledged the important work undertaken by the group and said that she was keen to hear an update on engineering measures discussed at the previous meeting in November 2022.

3. Updates on short term measures

- Road Safety Scotland

Michael McDonnell (MM) advised a national four-week fatigue campaign, upweighted for the A9 area, would run from 13 February 2023. A range of media including: TV, Radio, Digital and Out-of-Home would be deployed, the latter at service stations along the A9. All campaign assets will be available via roadsafety.scot.

Planning is also underway for a "Drive on the Left" campaign starting early April in time for the tourist season. Road Safety Scotland (RSS) is working with Scottish Government Marketing and Police Scotland. Contact has also been made with Visit Scotland, but key to the success of the campaign will be the partnership with the British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA). The Minister is keen to meet with BVRLA members. A variety of campaign assets, including leaflets, wristbands, windscreen stickers (and reservoir gaiters for bikers) will be deployed via partners during the campaign.

- BEAR Scotland (NW)

Kevin McKechnie (KM) outlined the progress made so far on the measures, which were recently approved. He explained that work had already started to improve the consistency of road markings and signage along the route with the aim of improving transitions between single/dual carriageway sections, better delineation of carriageways / lanes and encouraging drivers to drive on the left on single carriageway sections. Progress has already been made in the Birnam to Dalguise section with surfacing and lining. Textured white lining is being installed to provide better visibility with acoustic properties, which will provide a “rumble strip” effect to improve lane discipline. Eight Variable Message Signs (VMS) are being placed on the route to enhance the existing permanent VMS and these will display messages to support the road safety campaigns and good driver behaviour. KM explained that they were currently ahead of schedule to deliver the measures planned for this financial year. The Minister thanked BEAR Scotland for the progress made since the measures were approved.

4. Route updates

- Perth to Scrabster

Kevin McKechnie (KM) described a number of engineering schemes to improve road safety at a various of locations on the route. These include signage for the Ralia truck stop, surfacing and signage at the Ballinluig junction, safety barrier works at various locations including Bruar, Pitlochry and Trinafour. Other schemes have been completed at the Munlochry junction, Tore roundabout and Raigmore junction to improve road safety.

Martin Reid (MR) suggested that in-vehicle technology was not keeping up with the speed limit signage on the route particularly in relation to the HGV speed limit trial and that the signage may be causing confusion. MR went on to enquire about the future of the speed limit trial, which is being considered as part of the National Speed Management Review. The Minister asked to be updated on this.

- Dunblane to Perth

Pat Shields (PS) confirmed that Amey had assumed responsibility for the A9 between Keir and Inveralmond roundabouts in August 2022. Schemes to improve safety at junctions at Broom of Dalreach and Blackford have been delivered along with the installation of vehicle activated signs. New investigations are also being considered for Keir and Broxden roundabouts. Consideration is being given to restrictions on turning manoeuvres in the Auchterarder area.

5. Update from group members

- Donnie MacKinnon (DM) highlighted that there had been three collisions resulting in four fatalities since the last meeting of the group. Whilst investigations are still ongoing, there are not believed to be any issues with the road at the locations of these collisions. He went on to outline the intelligence led police patrols and other enforcement activities with partner organisations that are taking place and planned for the A9. The Minister enquired as to whether drink driving was still a problem. Stewart Mackie (SM) explained that whilst drink driving was still apparent, impairment due to drugs was higher than had previously been evident and that this is a concern for the Police. Neil Greig (NG) pointed out that there are no driver rehabilitation courses available for drink or drug driving in Scotland. Courses for drink

driving are available in other parts of the UK and NG would be keen to see a drug driving course being supported as there is evidence of reduced re-offending as a result of such courses. Stewart Leggett (SL) suggested that this could be raised at the Road Safety Strategic Partnership Board. The Minister also agreed to raise this with the relevant Cabinet colleagues.

- David Richardson (DR) raised a difficulty in knowing the correct number to call to report issues such as black ice. Transport Scotland agreed to clarify these details.
- Anne Stewart (AS) outlined details of the North Safety Camera Unit's enforcement activities and supporting communications. She asked if access to suitable safe stopping areas could be provided to allow mobile camera enforcement at the roadworks on the A9 at the Tay Crossing project. Marco Bardelli (MB) will speak to BEAR Scotland and liaise with AS.
- Lisa MacKellaich (LM) reported that the Highland Council has been an early adopter of 20 mph limits in built up areas including some on the trunk road network. They will be implementing 115 locations across the whole council area by summer 2023 totalling 590 kms and have been liaising with Richard Perry (RP) on those that relate to trunk roads. Liaison has also been undertaken with Transport Scotland regarding changes to the Munlochry junction.
- Daryl McKeown (DM) advised that Perth and Kinross Council were continuing to monitor collision stats for A9 feeder roads.
- NG reported that IAM Roadsmart have been working with operators of the NC500 to promote businesses along the route whilst promoting their short course on driving on rural roads, which has received positive feedback.
- MR gave an overview of the historical position with the HGV speed limit trial, which commenced in 2014. He suggested that a wider adoption of the increased speed limit would result in cost savings and greater efficiencies for operators. The Minister asked that Transport Scotland clarify the current policy position (see earlier action).
- DR raised a general point regarding the condition of local roads off the A9. The Minister acknowledged that the financial landscape was very challenging requiring the Scottish Government and local authorities to make difficult decisions.
- Colin Simpson (CS) described how the National Park Authority conducts public messaging through its various media channels and expressed a willingness to support road safety campaigns. He also highlighted local business concerns that signage on the route could do more to promote them as rest areas and help tackle fatigue, he was concerned that signage appeared to be very generic. MB explained that powers to change the traffic signs manual had been devolved in 2022 giving greater flexibility to approve signs in Scotland citing an example at Bankfoot, which is associated with "not 24 hrs" facilities.

6. A9 Dualling update

- Laurence Campbell (LC) provided an update on the A9 dualling programme. Two sections of works are complete with all others except one (Birnam) having received Ministerial decisions confirming that the statutory process should be completed. Assessment of the most appropriate procurement process is currently ongoing.

7. AOB

- Nil

8. Conclusion and Next Steps

- The Minister thanked members for attending, stated her intention to re-convene in April and closed the meeting.

Actions arising

- Update on HGV speed limit trial and National Speed Limit Review to be provided to the group – **Action Transport Scotland.**
- Review use of existing signage for 50mph speed limit trial – **Action Transport Scotland.**
- Enquire with Road Safety Strategic Partnership Board about availability of drug/drink driving rehabilitation courses in Scotland – **Action Transport Scotland**
- Enquire with Keith Brown MSP regarding availability of drug/drink driving rehabilitation courses in Scotland – **Action Transport Scotland.**
- Clarify details of helpline number for issues on the trunk road network – **Action Transport Scotland.**
- MB to liaise with local authority and Operating Company regarding safety camera van locations at Tay Crossing – **Action Transport Scotland.**

-----End Of Meeting Note-----