

Minutes

26 April 2021 (vis MS TEAMS)

1. Welcome and Introductions

David McKenzie
Marco Bardelli
Michael McDonnell
Michelle Little
Morag Mackay
Richard Perry
Sam MacNaughton
Stuart Wilson
Daryl McKeown
David Richardson
Eric Dunion

Gail Cleaver
Gerard Kelly
Kevin McKechnie
Lisa MacKellaich
Neil Lumsden PS
Maria Campbell
Martin Reid
Andrew Mather PS
Christopher Murray PS
Neil Greig – IAM Roadsmart

2. Apologies

Nick Groom
Matthew Millar
Robin Pope
Brian Cargill
Grant Campbell

3. Previous minutes & actions

4. Average Speed Camera Update

Eric Dunion. System performing well, stable, offending rate low. No significant concerns. Once traffic flow restores, may see increase in offending rate. GK queried whether the group could raise potential sites with ED for enforcement over holiday period. ED suggested increased traffic levels over holiday period. KMCK success south of Inverness – any potential for north of Inverness as an option. SW confirmed site selection would be subject to annual site selection process. ED confirmed stats are under preparation for next annual process. Any sites identified would likely be delivered in the next financial year. DR – use the site regularly but doesn't see any need for cameras. MB raised point to note, Cross Tay Road project – PKC 3km realignment project, will have average speed cameras installed. Once A9 is dualled, there is no plan to install cameras by default, will be subject to annual site selection process.

5. Key Performance Indicators

Committed to rigorous programme of reporting for 3 years following 2014 installation. Have not continued to 'report' on A9 safety whilst works underway due to changing environment whilst works underway. Content to prepare a report for the group if required. Baseline is now ten years old. NG – continuous monitoring is still required, exceptions should be the

focus vs general report. Useful to have stats from A9 group to represent the successes of the scheme. No particular patterns emerging but the route is continually monitored.

6. Group Priorities

David Richardson – Indicated a lot of black ice on A9 early in the year, particularly at the junction of the A949. Contacted 101 and was pointed to local authority then TS. Also commented on volume of litter, including sandwich packs and drinks cans. Didn't believe the litter was from visitors. MB – safety issue for those who have to collect the litter. Don't want public out collecting litter for safety reasons. Local authority are responsible for litter collection including trunk roads (although not motorways). MB raised at an earlier meeting, Council have indicated they are not picking up litter due to various issues, MB considering options, albeit a social issue. Noted being reported widely across Scotland in addition to A9.

Neil Greig asked *“Voluntary litter picking is a growing issue locally in Inverclyde as well. Its almost becoming accepted practice. I recall TS were looking at CCTV enforcement at key junctions - did this ever happen?”*

Eric Dunion – Safety Camera Unit restricted in where it can go, bound by criteria of site selection. Actively looking at short term deployment sites over the summer. Asking those attending to suggest any sites (not just A9) that may benefit from short term sites for additional enforcement to support other road safety schemes.

SW asked if group could identify and reflect on priority for what the group will focus on over the next few years. He asked that any suggestions for this be submitted to DM by end of May 2021. MB suggested north of Inverness – single carriageway, during summer constantly full of traffic, limited opportunities to overtake, need to focus on that location.

David Richardson – volume of traffic has grown – even with lockdown. Road hasn't changed despite traffic volumes massively increasing.

Neil Greig – Service area provision, roadside policy on A9, doesn't believe that drivers don't know they should leave the A9 for services. Smart motorways, A9 could be used as a corridor for pilot studies for innovation and new tech.

Sam MacNaughton – ground investigation (GI) traffic management undertaken at end of dual carriageway areas, have monitored traffic, traffic speeds are higher than expected and taking around a mile to reduce on leaving dual area, closing lanes well in advance of single carriageways. MB suggesting this may be related to the first safety camera units. Looking to upgrade 'end of dual carriageway' signage. Need to look at implications of new dual sections compared to older sections where there is the potential for U-turns.

To Do: Ask for submissions on group priorities by end of May to David McKenzie to collate.

7. A9 Dualling Update

Sam MacNaughton. Despite lockdown, design teams have still been active. Various design schemes underway. 9 in total. Tomatin to Moy, Made orders published in February, nearing end of statutory process. Vesting of land may happen around August at which point will go out to procurement. 4 schemes have approval for Orders – Tay Crossing to Ballinluig, Pitlochry to Killicrankie, Glengarry to Dalwhinnie and Dalwhinnie to Crubenmore. Likely to be complicated by covid restrictions. Land will then also be vested. 3 schemes with Reporter.

Killicrankie to Glengarry, Crubenmore to Kincaig, Dalraddy to Slochd. Dunkeld and Birnam – prolonged consultation process with community – hoping alignment will be published in Spring and then move onto stage 3 design and then orders.

Considering impact of high amount of construction across large parts of the A9 occurring at the same time. 2025 remains target completion date.

AM – Asked by officers if VASCAR markings will be on carriageway. SM will revert to confirm.

GI works contract awarded in December, now starting 10 May Dalraddy to Slochd. Likely to see traffic management on A9 as works start. Greater visibility from 17 May. TS staff not allowed out on network as yet. MB On schemes being designed, VASCAR and police observation platforms are part of design considerations.

NG – Seeing and hearing comments re potholes and road maintenance. Has this been impacted by restrictions? MB indicated this is the worst time of year for potholes. OC operating through lockdown, first essential maintenance only. From last summer, maintenance and planned repairs continued. Winter seen heavy salt use, temperatures fluctuating around zero for weeks on end, which creates freeze-thaw on road surface that can cause rapid failures. Aware of potholes and repairs underway.

SM keen to maintain speed limits at 40mph to ensure journey times not hugely impacted. MB indicated 'overtaking' has been greater issue than speeding, no serious accidents on the site. Luncarty / Birnam has been useful learning exercise. Journey time has increased from 10 to 12 minutes although at peak times up to 18 minutes. Comms message will be carried forward to other sites, helps road users expectations. Liaison officers will be written into each contract. Keen that TS and PS comms were interconnected. Links with PS for GI contracts to help manage driver behaviour.

8. Update from Partners

BEAR NW

Kevin McKechnie. 4 fatalities since previous meeting on A9 (since October 2019). Two involved cross-over incidents north of Inverness, one foreign driver one at Munlochy junction (young driver turning collided with southbound driver). SRS improvements – Tain junction A9, direction signing, lower speed limit, junctions resurfaced, TS commissioned consultant for longer term improvements. Rosskeen junction (north of Inverness), safety barrier and signing improvements. Dunkeld, improved signing and road markings. Raigmore interchange, pedestrian warning signs, vegetation clearance, speed limit reduced to 30mph. Looking at A96 to rationalise speed limit, introduced speed limit reduction introduced temporary. Skiach junction signage and safety barrier improvements, also looking at street lighting improvements. Investigations – NMU investigation at Tain over next 18 months. Thurso accident investigations, reduce speed limit at south end of Thurso. Also looking at NMU improvements. Arduallie to Everton high incidence of fatal accidents, not clear why, no clear link, potential for roadside risk removal. Some of these sections are difficult to work on.

DR – North End of Cromarty Bridge to Storehouse restaurant, foliage growing high, impacts visibility. KM will engage with landscaping team to address. *Note – see comment by Neil Lumsden, PS.*

BEAR NE

Fatal collisions – none in 2019, one in December 2020 – loss of control incident, undertaking drainage investigations, PS indicated accident not attributing to road layout/condition. Completed works Keir Roundabout – queue warning system. Risk reduction safety fence works at Greenloaning Balhaldie, same Blackford to Aberuthven, LED road stud improvements at Dunning and Tibbermore junctions funded through road safety budget. Road markings and LED stud upgrades funded through Minor Improvements budget at other ‘major’ at grade junctions. Static and VAS upgrades at Tibbermore this year. LED lighting columns, sign lights and bollards upgraded along whole route last year. U-turn incident at Broxden – possible U-turn ban at this location. Long term upgrade at Broxden underway, traffic modelling likely to be undertaken. Study at all right-turning junctions which flag up in annual safety review, looking at Dunning and Blackford junctions which could get VAS signage. Sign rationalisation investigation underway. Spent £2.5m on surfacing works July to April 2021, parapet upgrades, expansion joint installations, Auchterarder junction, looking at trial closure of junction. Crossrail link – link road may not be opened prior to the development.

SW - Hoping to share designs with PKC and looking at various options at Broxden development.

Police Scotland

Neil Lumsden

Section Perth to Scrabster, 2 fatals. Both instances were driver error – not road layout. Close liaison with RP and KMCK. Keen to hear how closure of Auchterarder junction goes. Robust plans in place for influx of visitors, A9 north of Perth covers 3 of 6 key areas. Expectation management is priority. This year is likely to present very large increase in volumes. Different layout of A9, especially north of Inverness, compared to motorways will be a challenge. Would be supportive of Fatigue Campaign. Would be supportive of volume counters being installed, would be useful information. Whins between Cromarty Bridge and Storehouse – Believe it would be safer for the whins to grow to deter overtaking, discussed issue specifically with NL and John Smith.

RSS

Michael McDonnell

Fatigue:

The fatigue campaign evaluated well but we also undertook some further work in this area which highlighted a number of interesting findings:

- People only recognise this as relevant when really tired.
- They are prepared to risk everything to ‘get home to their own bed’
- It is a totally impulsive behaviour and one which is very difficult to challenge

Speed:

The new speeding campaign launched in February along with the new Framework, with TV, radio and digital assets being created. The full evaluation is not yet available but we did conduct the same parallel research as in fatigue, again with some interesting findings:

- Many set out not to speed but fall into it
- 20-25 year-olds just like driving quickly
- Couriers have deadlines to meet – pushy and aggressive (they also don’t wear seatbelts but fasten them in such a way they can pull them over their heads if police come along)
- Quiet/country roads are good opportunities to ‘put the foot down’ and make up time

RSS Website:

www.roadsafety.scot: work continues on updating the site and Wave 20 of the Road Safety Information Tracking Study (RITS) has been completed and added to the site.

Future Campaigns:

In discussion with SG Marketing, we are looking to continue with the usual campaign: young drivers; drink- and drug-driving; and with 16% of in-car fatalities in Scotland not wearing a seatbelt we have also begun the development of a seatbelts campaign, likely to be ready to air in October.

More immediately is the whole area of visitor management, and we are currently considering how our foreign driver assets can be repurposed for 'Staycationers'

Good Egg In-car Safety Campaign:

We will work with GES again this year to run seat-checking events across Scotland. One of the successes of recent years has been working with PS on 'Enforcement Days', as this is a better use of time than checking those who voluntarily attend. We are keen to explore and expand.

Another suggestion being explored is the possibility of an 'In Case of Emergency' (ICE) sticker campaign to provide essential advice to emergency services in the event of an unconscious person involved in accident. MM shared example of accident in England where there were no details of the people involved due to their personal circumstances.

Road Safety Framework

Michelle Little

RSF launched in February 2021, working on delivery plan for framework. Targets/KPIs will be made, including national speed indicators (100 will be installed across Scotland). Will inform analytical product and will allow focus on key issues (i.e. who is speeding / what kind of vehicles).

SW - Framework sets ambitious targets – zero road deaths by 2050. Not impossible. More emphasis on risk management.

9. AOB: Nil
10. Date of next meeting: Autumn of 2021, dates will be circulated in advance.