Speed Management on the Trunk Road network

Scotland's Trunk Road Network



- 3500 km (2200 miles) in length
- Character varies from motorway to 6m wide carriageways
- 6 per cent of Scotland's Road Length
- Approx 1/3rd of traffic and 2/3rd of HGV trips
- Replacement value c £21 billion





Scotland's Trunk Road Network





Current Speed Limit Guidance

- "A key factor when setting a limit is what the road looks like to the road users, such as its geometry and adjacent land use.
- Drivers are likely to expect and respect lower limits, and be influenced when deciding on an appropriate speed
- A principal aim in determining appropriate speed limits should therefore be to provide a consistent message between the road geometry and environment, and for changes in speed limit to reflect changes in the road layout and characteristics".



Current Speed Limit Guidance

- "The underlying aim of speed management policies should be to achieve a 'safe' distribution of speeds which reflects the function of the road and the impacts on the local community.
- This should imply a mean speed appropriate to the prevailing conditions, and all vehicles moving at speeds as close to the posted speed limit as possible".

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Suggested Outcomes of Current Guidance

- Avoid abnormally high or low limits credibility and consistency should be retained.
- Limits should be legible to road users and largely self enforcing.
- The messages the road gives and how these are affected by its setting are important.
- Doing relatively basic things well across the network should support better speed compliance.
 - Improving the look and feel of the network
 - Making more specific provision for vulnerable users and other priority groups



Current Trunk Road Responses

- Speed Management programme based around safety camera handbook and speed limit delivery
- Targeted casualty reduction programme based around annual safety review
- Risk Management Programme delivering safe roads and roadsides
- Motorcycle safety programme specific route based engineering measures supported by education and enforcement
- Measures to support active travel casualty reduction
- 9 of the 20 actions in the Strategic Road Safety Plan make some reference to speed





- Safety Camera handbook criteria have been updated
 - Increase the site selection collision assessment period (3 yrs to 5 yrs)
 - Change the points allocated to collisions (from 1, 2, 3 to 1, 4.5 and 7.1)
 - Prioritise vulnerable road users by double weighting points allocated for collisions involving VRUs.
 - Introduce an additional speed threshold.

https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/scottish-safety-cameraprogramme-handbook/



Speed Limit Delivery

- Speed Limit Review was completed in 2012
- Outcomes of the review have been delivered
- Current speed limit requests reflect community concerns
- Other changes are related to wider changes and development impacts.
- We continue to manage and change speeds where guidance supports such changes

Reflection



- Current Speed limit guidance doesn't require vehicles to be travelling "as slowly as possible". It's primary aims appear to focus on consistency, legibility and proportionate enforceability.
- The landscape and context are changing and other factors are coming more into focus
- If we were to reflect on speed limit guidance and emerging pressures and opportunities, would we keep it as it is?



Landscape and Context

- Declaration of the Climate Change Emergency
- Development of Road Safety Framework post 2020
- Production of NTS, STPR2 etc.
- Greater promotion of Active Travel and Public Transport
- HGV speed limit changes south of the Border
- Calls for lower urban speed limits
- Changes in vehicle technology (autonomous systems etc.)
- Ongoing pursuit of vision zero





- Does our current approach to speed management support our wider aims on safety, active travel and carbon reduction?
- If yes, how do we use speed management to support 2030 casualty reduction targets and other outcomes?
- If it doesn't, How might we change it what outcomes would we be seeking and how would we prioritise them?
- What other things might we have to do to support any change?





- Does our current approach to speed management support our wider aims on safety, active travel and carbon reduction?
- In some ways yes;
 - Safety Camera criteria offer more read across on these topics.
 - The policy and funding background is evolving to better enable delivery.
- In other ways, not yet;
 - The current criteria and assessment framework don't lend themselves to meeting a balance across these topics for all the situation we encounter.

Possibilities Looking Forward



- If we changed current guidance, what outcomes would we be seeking and how would we prioritise them?
 - Casualty reduction would continue to be important.
 - Carbon reduction and climate change would become more prominent possibly being pre eminent.
 - Active travel would retain prominence, along with place making, wider accessibility and local air quality as examples.
 - Resourcing our ability to change would remain a concern
- Too early to say how these would balance in practise

Potential Outcomes



- Retaining consistency should remain a central theme in speed management – "the right limit should apply in the right place"
- This may be "differently consistent";
 - Managing speed for non safety outcomes could become more common.
 - Carbon reduction, active travel and other topics will have increasing prominence
 - There may be a ongoing safety driven demand for general speed limits to fall?
 - Communities typically seek lower limits than currently apply
 - Lower speeds tend to support safety outcomes in a given situation
- Guidance may have to change to reflect these pressures



Your Questions

