

The Correspondence Team
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London SW1P 4DR

May 23rd 2023

Your Ref: 42733

Dear Correspondence Team

Thank you for your letter, dated May 19th 2023, in which you tell me you are replying to my correspondence addressed to Richard Holden MP, the Roads Minister.

My letter to the minister was concerned solely with the legal implications associated with All Lane Running smart motorways following the Prime Minister's statement. *'Smart motorways are unpopular because they are **unsafe**'*.

Nowhere in your one and half page letter do you mention anything to do with the legal implications associated with smart motorways – I imagine this was quite deliberate but if not, then clearly nobody bothered to read my letter!

It is plainly obvious that my suggestion made to the minister, that the Department for Transport and National Highways seek legal advice from the Government's Law Officer, *BEFORE* restarting the two, three quarters completed schemes (M52 junctions 6 – 8 & M6 junctions 21a – 26) because you have told me they will be completed as planned (converting the hard shoulder into an additional traffic lane).

Opening these schemes without hard shoulders is not only irresponsible but a blatant disregard for the safety of those who will use these roads.

It is clear there is now a very big difference of opinion between politicians and the Department for Transport and National Highways, about All Lane Running smart motorways.

The public will be most interested to discover who runs our country – elected politicians or civil servants, and the sooner the Prime Minister gets a grip of the situation and orders the reinstatement of ALL hard shoulders to Britain's motorways the better and safer it will be for those who use these roads.

Government, and its agents, have a Duty of Care to deliver the safest possible roads and, in respect of All Lane Running smart motorways, they have failed in this duty and the number of deaths, in which the absence of a hard shoulder has been shown to be the major contributory cause, is testimony to that fact.

If you disagree with this claim you should note the following statement made in correspondence to the Transport Select Committee by the Transport Secretary, Mark Harper MP, on May 19th:-

'Drivers are twice as likely to die in collisions involving stopped cars on smart motorways than on conventional motorways'.

It is time for those at the Department of Transport, with responsibility for delivering a safe motorway network, to end their arrogant approach, accept the dangers associated with the absence of hard shoulders and prepare a plan for the reinstatement, between the bridges, of the most important safety feature on fast moving motorways.

Yours faithfully

Mike Rawson (Ret Met Police Traffic Sergeant)
www.smartmotorwayskill.co.uk

