

Report to Partnership Meeting 7th February 2025

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

National Speed Management Review Consultation

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report introduces the public consultation on the National Speed Management Review and invites Members to consider the key areas that HITRANS should include in submitting a response.

Background

The National Speed Management Review (NSMR) consultation seeks to gather public and stakeholder input on proposed changes to Scotland's speed limits.

The review supports Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030 by aiming to reduce casualties, enhance road safety and promote efficient travel for all road users.

The consultation document outlines the key objectives of the NSMR and presents changes to national speed limits on single carriageways for various vehicle categories, as well as both single and dual carriageways for goods vehicles over 7.5 tonnes. The proposed adjustments consider maintaining or modifying national speed limits and increasing limits for goods vehicles over 7.5 tonnes. These options are aimed at addressing variations in vehicle speed limits to reduce driver frustration leading to reduced casualties and ultimately enhanced safety of Scotland's road network

Transport Scotland are inviting public and stakeholder participation and feedback can be submitted through a variety of channels, with the consultation open from 27 November 2024 to 5 March 2025.

Transport Scotland state that responses to the consultation gathered during this period will inform final recommendations, with outcomes shared in spring 2025.

A copy of the National Speed Limit Review Final Report and supporting materials can be found at this link: <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/national-speed-management-review-2024/>

A link to the public consultation for the NMSR is provided below: [National Speed Management Review - Scottish Government consultations - Citizen Space](#)

A number of the in-person engagement events for the NMSR are still to take place including those in Elgin, Inverness, Stornoway, Campbeltown, Wick and Portree.

National Speed Management Review

The Scottish Government has undertaken a National Speed Management Review to examine the potential effects of changes to speed limits across Scotland. The review supports Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030 and seeks to ensure speed limits on Scotland's roads are appropriate and help contribute to a reduction in injury and death on our roads.

The review examined a range of approaches, including HGV-specific speed limits, drawing insights from both national and international case studies. This includes the impact of the 50 mph speed limit trial for HGVs on the A9 single carriageway sections between Perth and Inverness. Since this trial there has been improved driver behaviour on this section of the route, a greater compliance with speed limits and a reduction in deaths and serious injuries.

Consultation

The consultation on the National Speed Limit Review was launched on 27th November 2024 and closes on 5th March 2025. The consultation is designed to gather views on proposed changes to the national speed limit on single carriageway roads in Scotland and to the speed limits applying to HGVs on single and dual carriageway roads in Scotland.

The consultation invites feedback on proposals to:

- **Do-Minimum:** No change to existing speed limits
- **Option 1:** Reduce national speed limit on single-carriageway roads to 50mph and increase Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) (more than 7.5 tonne maximum laden weight) speed limit on single-carriageways to 50mph.

In developing a draft response HITRANS have discussed the consultation with colleagues in partner Local Authorities. A copy of HITRANS draft response to the National Speed Limit Review can be found in **Appendix A** to this report.

HITRANS recommends no change to the existing national speed limit on 60mph single-carriageway roads but that consideration should be given to how national speed limits apply to single track roads that are so prevalent in our region forming a core element of the A and B class road network.

HITRANS supports the proposal to increase speed limits for goods vehicles exceeding 7.5 tonnes on single carriageways from 40 mph to 50 mph and dual carriageways from 50 mph to 60 mph. However, consideration needs to be given to the potential maintenance and safety impacts that this may have on those roads single carriageway which are not designed or constructed to a high standard.

Taking into account the geographical nature of the HITRANS Area, the key points outlined in HITRANS response for recommending no change to the existing national speed limit on 60mph single-carriageway roads are:

- Considering the significant length of national speed limit road network and unique geography of much of the HITRANS area it is felt that a change in speed limit, particularly on our A class single carriageway roads, could have a significant impact on our rural communities. In particular, in relation to issues including driver behaviour, extending

journey times to core services and urban centres and a negative impact on local businesses/ Highland Economy.

- In terms of driver behaviour, increased frustration or impatience could potentially lead to more aggressive driving or risky overtaking manoeuvres. Setting inappropriate speed limits can lead to drivers ignoring them which has consequences in terms of wider speed compliance.
- In economic terms, in particular relating to journey times, there is concern re the impact a reduced speed limit will have on local businesses e.g. businesses in time-sensitive sectors, may face challenges with supply chain logistics and increased operational costs. The consultation states journey times would be maintained, evidence of this has been requested in the consultation response for rural areas.
- HITRANS and local partners are unable to predict where the balance point is between the number of collisions initially reduced by a reduction in speed v the potential increase in collision numbers caused by increased driver frustration and poor overtaking manoeuvres.
- Any changes in speed limit would have an impact on policing resources and should also be supported by a national media campaign.

HITRANS are generally supportive of the proposed changes to the HGV speeds limits due to the:

- Improvement in driver behaviour, greater speed compliance and reduction in deaths and serious injuries following the introduction of the A9 trial of increasing the speed limit for goods vehicles exceeding 7.5 tonnes on single carriageways from 40 mph to 50 mph and dual carriageways from 50 mph to 60 mph.
- The results shown in the 'Evaluation of the national HGV speed limit increase in England and Wales', which evidences no increase in vehicle collisions as a result of the speed limit change and on average a 1.7mph increase in HGV speeds following the speed limit change.

However, as stated careful consideration should be given to any potential negative impacts such an increase may have on those roads where the national speed limit currently applies but are not designed or constructed to a high standard.

Recommendation

Members are invited to:

1. Note the report.
2. Consider HITRANS draft response to the National Speed Management Review attached as Appendix A to this report.
3. Agree that should there be any amendments to the consultation response sign off of the final HITRANS response is delegated to the Partnership Director.

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