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11 October 2017

Dear Guy

A1(M) JUNCTION 17 TRAFFIC DISRUPTION IN PETERBOROUGH

Thank you for your letter of 8 September to Martin Fellows about traffic disruption in Peterborough in the week commencing 19 June caused by our work on the A1(M) at junction 17.

Having reviewed the impact of our work and your recommendations, measures have been put in place to prevent a future reoccurrence of the disruption caused to our customers and improve how we inform them.

We recognise that press releases and other publications should be written in language that is clear and allows the reader to understand the implications and impacts of our work. We will therefore ensure future press releases and other publications clearly set out what we are doing and what we expect readers to have to do differently.

To reinforce this, we are also reviewing our regional communications and stakeholder liaison strategies. We recognise that a proactive approach is required and stakeholders including parish councils, local businesses and transport operators need to be better informed.

In future, we will fully consider all stakeholders, residents and road users in the immediate and surrounding area to ensure we proactively communicate our work to all those affected. Communicating our plans will not be restricted to written information and for work which is likely to have a more significant impact, we will consider holding local information events to provide interested parties with opportunities to speak to us in person and receive more detailed information.

For example, we trialled our mobile exhibition unit known as 'chatty van' over the summer. This is a mobile exhibition unit that can act as a 'pop up' event at any location to give local communities the chance to learn more about the work that is happening across our region.

The mobile unit has generated a lot of interest with our customers and stakeholders. We've had positive feedback from local authorities, parish councils and customers that met with us. There's also been positive media coverage and interviews were held for BBC radio.

Road Management Services (RMS) the DBFO company for the A1(M) have also accepted the importance of undertaking a better approach to publishing future road works and as a direct result has recently employed a dedicated communications manager.

Additionally, we also recognise the need to be more proactive regarding media interaction. We will, therefore, issue earlier press releases and media interviews in advance of works starting, with the aim to providing motorists with an early warning of our proposed work. Discussions are ongoing to ensure that more appropriate and meaningful information is displayed on the Highways England website and Twitter account.

Regarding the impact of proposed work and diversion routes, we recognise the need to fully assess and understand the impact of them. Where there is an anticipated impact from proposed work, we will carry out additional detailed assessments.

We accept that signing in advance of and during our work needs to be effective and clear. Work is underway with a working group to look at the use of 'black on yellow' signs used, with the aim of providing better information to our customers.

Although a number of changes have already been made, we need to do more to enhance our approach to undertaking roadworks, stakeholder liaison, road user communications, impact assessments and conflict management. We are committed to this and learning lessons from our failures following work on the A1(M) at junction 17.

As a result of the delay caused, I am aware that RMS has undertaken additional discussions with the private developer currently undertaking work at junction 17. This has resulted in the developers approach being revised and additional measures being implemented.

We have two road surface repair schemes scheduled to commence in late October on the A1 northbound and southbound carriageways that will require full overnight road closures between J17 and the A47 Junction at Wansford.

We have considered the recommendations you provided us with for these schemes and we are working collaboratively to manage the potential disruption to our customers by planning these works in consideration of Peterborough City Council, Northamptonshire County Council, the Winvic development at J17, the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon team and RMS. A joint press release with these parties will be issued.

Thank you for your observations and recommendations and I hope my reply has been helpful.

I will schedule a telephone call with you to talk you through these works in more detail. However if you wish to discuss any of these issues in the interim please call me on 07881 805234.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Amor', is centered on a light gray rectangular background.

Simon Amor
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