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Dear Martin

White lining and cats eyes: A14 in Cambridgeshire and Suffolk

I am writing to express concern that nine months after putting in place a new maintenance contractor there appears to be little obvious progress in renewing white lining and cats eyes on the A14. You will know from our previous discussions that Transport Focus regards the current situation as unacceptable from a safety and customer experience perspective.

The very fact that you have had to put up temporary signs in some locations advising that there are no road markings (because they have worn away), for example on the Haughley bypass, underlines the point. I am also concerned that timescales for addressing even the worst problems seem to be slipping. For instance work was supposed to have started in September this year on the Newmarket bypass (Simon Amor's letter to me dated 18 September), but there is no sign that anything has been done. From a road user perspective, the proportion of the route with cats eyes performing even adequately, seems low. As you know, we question how allowing road markings to exist in such poor condition on the A14/A154 roundabout is safe, never mind customer-focused.

Given the seeming lack of progress since April, we need greater assurance that there is a comprehensive programme to address the current deficiencies with white lines and cats eyes in a reasonable timescale. I should be grateful therefore if you would provide me with a comprehensive assessment of the condition, section by section, of these two asset types on the A14 in the East region (excluding the section for which the A14 project is currently responsible). I would then like to see firm dates by which you intend to bring any section that is not acceptable up to standard.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely


Guy Dangerfield
Head of Strategy

cc Nick Harris