

Title: Raising the speed limit for HGVs >7.5T on dual carriageway roads IA No: Lead department or agency: Department for Transport Other departments or agencies: None	Impact Assessment (IA)				
	Date: 08/07/2014				
	Stage: Consultation				
	Source of intervention: Domestic				
	Type of measure: Primary legislation				
Contact for enquiries: Alanna.Barber@dft.gsi.gov.uk ; 0207 944 5813					

Summary: Intervention and Options **RPC Opinion:** Awaiting scrutiny

Cost of Preferred (or more likely) Option			
Total Net Present Value	Business Net Present Value	Net cost to business per year (EANCB on 2009 prices)	In scope of One-In, Two-Out?
£0m	£0m	£0m	Yes
			Zero net cost

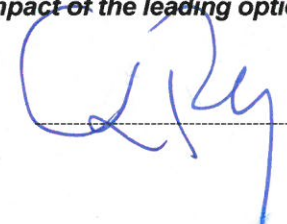
What is the problem under consideration? Why is government intervention necessary?
 On dual carriageways the speed limit for HGVs>7.5T is 50 mph. The average actual speed at which these HGVs travel in free flow conditions (when they are not held up by other traffic or obstructions such as junctions, hills or bends) is about 53 mph (excluding rigid 2 axle HGVs). More than 80% of HGVs exceed 50 mph in free-flow conditions. The limit is out of date and systematically ignored by professional HGV drivers. The proposal is to raise the speed limit on dual carriageway roads for these vehicles to 60mph, which would better reflect the capabilities of modern HGVs. Government intervention is necessary because speed is regulated by government, through speed limits, in order to balance the private benefits of speed of travel with the social costs (namely accidents) of high speeds.

What are the policy objectives and the intended effects?
 The intention is to modernise the speed limit, improve compliance, make the limit more credible and legitimise the behaviour of professional drivers. It would also be a deregulatory move, as HGV drivers will be able to drive at speeds they currently cannot. This measure links with the Government's decision to raise the speed limit for HGVs>7.5T on single carriageway roads from 40mph to 50mph.

What policy options have been considered, including any alternatives to regulation? Please justify preferred option (further details in Evidence Base)
 Three options are considered in the consultation:
 1) Do Nothing (the baseline comparison)
 2) Increasing the national speed limit for HGVs>7.5t on dual carriageways from 50 to 60mph. This is the preferred option.
 3) Increasing the national speed limit for HGVs>7.5t on dual carriageways from 50 to 55 mph.
 The speed limit cannot be changed without regulation.

Will the policy be reviewed? It will be reviewed. If applicable, set review date: April 2020					
Does implementation go beyond minimum EU requirements?				N/A	
Are any of these organisations in scope? If Micros not exempted set out reason in Evidence Base.		Micro Yes	< 20 Yes	Small Yes	Medium Yes
What is the CO ₂ equivalent change in greenhouse gas emissions? (Million tonnes CO ₂ equivalent)				Traded: N/A	Non-traded: N/A

I have read the Impact Assessment and I am satisfied that, given the available evidence, it represents a reasonable view of the likely costs, benefits and impact of the leading options.

Signed by the responsible Minister:  Date: 20/7/2014

Summary: Analysis & Evidence

Policy Options 2 and 3

Description: Increasing the national speed limit for HGVs>7.5t on dual carriageways from 50 to 60 mph (or 55mph).

FULL ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT

Price Base Year	PV Base Year	Time Period Years	Net Benefit (Present Value (PV)) (£m)		
			Low: N/A	High: N/A	Best Estimate: 0

COSTS (£m)	Total Transition (Constant Price) Years	Average Annual (excl. Transition) (Constant Price)	Total Cost (Present Value)
Low			0
High			0
Best Estimate	0	0	0

Description and scale of key monetised costs by 'main affected groups'

None. Transitional costs to Government associated with this measure would be incurred with the transitional costs from the HGV >7.5T speed limit change on single carriageways; there would not be additional costs.

Other key non-monetised costs by 'main affected groups'

None

BENEFITS (£m)	Total Transition (Constant Price) Years	Average Annual (excl. Transition) (Constant Price)	Total Benefit (Present Value)
Low			0
High			0
Best Estimate	0	0	0

Description and scale of key monetised benefits by 'main affected groups'

None

Other key non-monetised benefits by 'main affected groups'

Government would see a reduction in costs associated with dealing with HGV>7.5T speed limit offenders on dual carriageways, as compliance will improve substantially. A reduction in proceedings will also have benefits for businesses that currently receive a fixed penalty notice or are taken to court. However, these benefits have not been included as it is standard practice to exclude costs and benefits incurred to agents operating outside the law.

Key assumptions/sensitivities/risks	Discount rate	N/A
<p>We have assumed that HGV drivers will not choose to travel faster on dual carriageways than on motorways, and consequently that the average free-flow speeds on dual carriageways will not change. If this is not correct, there could be congestion, environmental, road safety and business impacts (primary journey time savings) which we have not taken into account.</p>		

BUSINESS ASSESSMENT (Options 2 and 3)

Direct impact on business (Equivalent Annual) £m:			In scope of OITO?	Measure qualifies as
Costs: 0	Benefits: 0	Net: 0		

Evidence Base (for summary sheets)

Policy Options

Policy Context

The maximum speed limit for Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) over 7.5 tonnes (t) on dual carriageway roads is currently 50 mph, as prescribed in Schedule 6 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, which applies to Great Britain. Vehicle specific speed limits are devolved in Northern Ireland and in Scotland they became devolved matters in 2012 allowing the limits there to be different from the rest of Great Britain.

Dual carriageway roads cover a range of standards of roads ranging from those built to similar standards as motorways (for example the A3 between London and Portsmouth and part of the A14 between the A1 and the M1/M6) to lower standard routes with local 50 mph maximum speed limits applying to all vehicles using them. Dual carriageways in urban areas are usually covered by 40 mph or 50 mph local speed limits or the default 30 mph speed limit for lit roads in built-up areas.

On dual carriageways the actual speed at which HGVs >7.5T travel in free flow conditions (when they are not held up by other traffic or obstructions such as junctions, hills or bends) is around 53 mph¹. More than 80% of HGVs >7.5T exceed the speed limit in free-flow conditions².

The average speed observed on motorways for these HGVs in free flow conditions is broadly the same at around 53/54 mph, even though the legal speed limit for larger HGVs on motorways is 60 mph. Free flow traffic data shows that 99% of articulated lorries travel within that speed limit. Furthermore the distribution (spread) of HGV speeds is fairly narrow compared to cars. HGVs tend to travel at broadly similar speeds to one another, so the average speed is a good indication of the speed at which most HGVs travel (for further information, see the Appendix). A major reason is that their speeds are limited to 56 mph (90km/h) as required by EU legislation.

It is implausible that lorries would travel faster on dual carriageways than on motorways, so we believe there would be minimal change on the ground if the dual carriageway speed limit were to be increased to match the motorway limit at 60mph. It suggests that the main effect of the 50 mph dual carriageway speed limit for HGVs is to criminalise common-place driver behaviour. In doing so it risks contributing to bringing other road traffic regulations, particularly speed limits, into disrepute.

The systematic and rigorous enforcement of the current 50 mph speed limit is difficult and establishing a credible deterrent for the 50 mph limit would not be a reasonable call on finite police resources. It is more difficult to automate using cameras than road speed limits. If a lot more enforcement did occur it would involve the disproportionate targeting and punishment of these drivers.

The change would apply to England and Wales. HGVs would still have to obey the maximum speed for the road if it is set at a lower speed than 60 mph. Their speeds will also be determined by speed limiters which must be set at 56 mph.

We also consider in the consultation raising the speed limit for HGVs >7.5t to 55mph. We do not consider that this would change the effects described above. 55mph is closer to the 56mph speed limiter requirement, although as 60 mph is the limit for motorways, so using 55 mph would add complexity for no different effects to changing the dual carriageway limit to 60 mph.

Policy Objective

The policy objective is to modernise the speed limit for HGVs >7.5T on dual carriageways, increasing compliance, making it more credible and legitimising the behaviour of professional drivers. It would also be a deregulatory move.

¹ This is based on 2012 observed speed data. It excludes observations for 2-axle rigid HGVs, around two thirds of which weigh less than 7.5t. Please see the Annex for more detail. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/spe01-vehicle-speeds> SPE 0101. The 2013 data recently published is very similar.

² Based on 2012 observed speed data and again excluding observations for 2-axle rigid HGVs.

Associated Measures

This measure forms part of a package with the decision to raise speed limits on single carriageways for HGVs > 7.5T on single carriageways. Some parts of the package of measures planned to accompany the possible change in the single carriageway limit for HGVs more than 7.5t from 40 mph to 50 mph are also relevant to dual carriageways. They would be applied to dual carriageways too, if their limit were raised from 50 mph to 60 mph.

In particular the more rigorous and systematic approach to driver conduct proceedings would be applied to offenders breaking a revised 60 mph limit. In practice this would be likely to involve very few cases, as there is a 98% compliance rate³ with the equivalent 60 mph lorry speed limits on motorways.

The Department's existing circular about local speed limits advises local authorities about where local speed limits applicable to all traffic can be put in place. Limits can be used for sections of dual carriageways where there is significant development and poor design features. The circular also identified (in a departure from its predecessor) that where there is a possible risk of air quality limits being exceeded, then this itself could be an important factor in the choice of the speed limit for the road.

In practice because we do not believe raising the speed limit to 60mph would result in actual changes in HGV speeds, it is unlikely to affect local speed limit decisions. But the ability to use them is available to local authorities if they wish.

Monetised and Non-Monetised Costs and Benefits

We do not predict a change in free-flow speeds as a result of the change in maximum speed limits. The only change that we expect is that this deregulatory move would legitimise the behaviour of drivers who are currently breaking the speed limit. Proceedings against these drivers would be avoided, which would result in a cost saving for business and for government.

Cost Saving for Business

According to Ministry of Justice guidance, it is standard practice to exclude costs and benefits incurred to agents operating outside of the law. For this reason, we have chosen not to include any benefits to business from this proposal, since those who would benefit are currently breaking the law. Under the new limit, individuals would no longer be proceeded against for exceeding 50 mph on a dual carriageway, therefore avoiding any costs associated with either receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice or being taken to court.

Cost Saving for Government

Government and the police incur costs from handling speed limit offences. These include: police costs (collecting and documenting evidence, administrative costs if a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued); Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) costs if the case is referred to them for consideration; and if it goes to court, further CPS and court costs.

As a result of this measure, these costs would be avoided for all HGVs currently proceeded against for breaking the vehicle specific speed limit of 50 mph on dual carriageways.

We have not quantified this benefit. However, we estimate that the benefits would be small because there is little specific enforcement of this speed limit and where sanctions are imposed fixed penalty notices are available.

Costs and benefits to wider society

Since we do not anticipate any change in speed of travel, there will be no monetised costs or benefits incurred to wider society (such as for example road safety implications or environmental implications).

A non-monetised benefit will be the greater understanding of the policy by motorists.

Implementation Costs for Government

1. There would be no additional cost to reprint The Highway Code, as this is reprinted at regular intervals and should the decision be made to proceed, we would liaise with the Driver and Vehicle

³ SPE0105 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/spe01-vehicle-speeds>

Standards Agency regarding stock levels and new editions of the Code. However there would be some transitional/implementation costs accruing to government as a result of a speed limit change, as government would need to raise awareness of the new limits, both to HGV drivers themselves and all other motorists - and this is expected to cost central government £50,000. Motorists are generally unaware of the lower, differential speed limits for HGVs and other vehicles. There could also be costs associated with erecting signs at the border between England and Scotland, reminding drivers of the different limits.

2. However, we have not included these costs in the summary tables above, because these changes would occur simultaneously with changing the speed limit for these vehicles on single carriageway roads – and so the same highway code changes, awareness campaigns and sign changes would cover both. The cost of these additional signs has been included in the final stage impact assessment for the speed limit change on single carriageway roads.

Direct Costs and Benefits to Business

If we counted savings from people presently exceeding the current speed limit then this measure would qualify as an OUT, as that would amount to a reduction in the degree of regulation on drivers during their employment on business. Any cost savings to business from a reduction in proceedings would fall on HGV drivers who are currently breaking the law. In accordance with Ministry of Justice guidance, it is standard to exclude benefits falling to those operating outside the law. Therefore, there are no quantified costs or benefits to business as a result of this measure.

Risks and Assumptions

We have assumed that HGV drivers would not choose to drive faster on dual carriageways than on motorways, and consequently that there will be no change in free-flow speeds of HGVs >7.5T on dual carriageways as a result of this change. If HGVs do change their speeds, there could be congestion, environmental, road safety and business impacts.

However, we do not think this is likely because motorways are designed and built to a higher standard than dual carriageways; so road surface, geometry, layout and visibility are suitable for higher speeds. We believe that professional HGV drivers are likely to have the same behavioural response to road condition as car drivers, and will drive more slowly on dual carriageways than on motorways⁴.

Wider Impacts

Equalities

Any negative impacts on equalities have been considered. These include negative impacts on race, sexual orientation, religious belief, transgender/transsexual persons, disability, gender, age, etc. We have concluded that this measure would not have an impact on any particular group.

Small and Microbusiness Assessment

As we do not consider that actual speeds will change, there will be no impact on business.

Greenhouse Gas Assessment and Wider Environmental Impacts

Because we do not predict a change in free-flow speeds as a result of the change in maximum speed limits, we do not predict any change to greenhouse gases or other environmental impacts.

⁴ As in DfT's published free-flow speed statistics, car drivers drove 1 or 2mph slower on dual carriageways than on motorways 2002-2012. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/free-flow-vehicle-speeds-in-great-britain-2012> SPE0103.

Competition Assessment

Because we do not predict a change in free-flow speeds as a result of the change in maximum speed limits, we do not predict a change in competition.

Implementation Plan and Review

This Impact Assessment accompanies a public consultation on this measure. Responses to that consultation will be taken into account in deciding the way forward.

If the decision is made to proceed with the change to the maximum speed limit for HGVs >7.5T on dual carriageways, we would seek to make the required changes to the Road Traffic Regulation Act at the same time as the changes to effect the change in the maximum speed limit for HGVs >7.5T on single carriageways, i.e. in early 2015. This is to allow the changes to be highlighted to the public together.

The regulatory changes will be subject to a post implementation review. This will allow for examination of any changes associated with the change of maximum permissible speed.

We have assessed the data which the Department holds, and consider that current methods of collection would enable us to analyse and make further decisions. We will note traffic volumes, free flow speeds and accidents involving HGVs before and the change has been implemented. This data will help to inform us about what effect, if any, the maximum speed limit increase on dual carriageways has had.

Resource to monitor the impacts and analyse the data will be met by existing resource at the DfT. We envisage this requiring 3 days' work once a year, by a person at Executive Officer level.

We would use the publicity campaign planned for the rise in speed limits for HGV >7.5T on single carriageways to make drivers aware of this change, too.

Appendix: HGV Free-Flow Speeds on Dual Carriageways /Motorways

Department for Transport statistics

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/series/speeds-statistics>

Table SPE0101

Free-flow vehicle speeds on non-built-up roads by road type and vehicle type in Great Britain, 2012

Per cent / miles per hour / number of vehicles

	Heavy goods vehicles ⁵											
	Motorcycles ⁷	Cars	Cars towing	Light Goods ⁴	Buses / Coaches	Rigid by number of axles				Articulated by number of axles		
						2 ⁶	3	4 or more	All Rigid	3 & 4	5 or more	All Articulated
(a) Motorways¹												
Under 50 mph	4	4	13	3	5	6	11	13	7	12	11	11
50-59 mph	26	14	56	15	41	49	79	86	53	84	89	88
60-64 mph	9	14	19	14	25	12	9	0	11	2	0	1
65-69 mph	13	20	8	19	11	13	0	0	11	1	0	0
70-74 mph	16	21	3	20	10	10	0	0	9	0	0	0
75-79 mph	14	14	1	15	5	6	0	0	5	0	0	0
80-89 mph	14	11	0	12	2	4	0	0	3	0	0	0
90 mph and over	4	2	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Speed limit (mph)	70	70	60	70	70	n/a	60	60	n/a	60	60	60
Percentage exceeding limit	48	48	31	49	18	n/a	10	1	n/a	3	0	1
Percentage exceeding limit by more than 10 mph	18	12	3	14	3	n/a	0	1	n/a	1	0	0
Average speed (mph)	68	69	57	69	61	61	54	53	60	54	53	53
Number observed (thousands)	2,518	368,686	2,596	67,504	5,264	24,725	2,250	1,329	28,304	5,707	34,550	40,256
(b) Dual carriageways²												
Under 30 mph	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
30-39 mph	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0
40-49 mph	4	3	15	3	9	8	18	20	10	21	17	17
50-59 mph	17	17	54	17	41	50	69	78	53	73	82	81
60-64 mph	11	17	18	16	26	14	11	0	13	2	0	1
65-69 mph	16	22	8	21	12	13	0	0	11	1	0	0
70-79 mph	32	32	4	32	11	13	0	0	11	1	0	0
80 mph and over	19	8	0	10	1	3	0	0	2	0	0	0
Speed limit (mph)	70	70	60	70	60	n/a	50	50	n/a	50	50	50
Percentage exceeding limit	51	40	30	42	50	n/a	80	80	n/a	78	83	82
Percentage exceeding limit by more than 10 mph	19	8	4	10	12	n/a	11	1	n/a	5	1	1
Average speed (mph)	70	68	56	68	60	60	54	53	59	53	53	53
Number observed (thousands)	277	36,088	280	5,707	323	2,013	202	158	2,373	366	2,261	2,628
(c) Single carriageways³												
Under 20 mph	1	0	2	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
20-29 mph	3	3	7	3	3	3	6	7	4	7	2	3
30-39 mph	12	16	19	15	19	19	27	28	20	25	23	23
40-49 mph	35	44	51	43	50	47	50	46	47	48	54	53
50-59 mph	28	30	19	30	24	25	15	17	24	18	21	20
60-64 mph	8	5	1	6	2	3	0	0	3	1	0	0
65-69 mph	5	2	0	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
70 mph and over	8	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Speed limit (mph)	60	60	50	60	50	n/a	40	40	n/a	40	40	40
Percentage exceeding limit	21	8	20	9	28	n/a	66	64	n/a	67	75	73
Percentage exceeding limit by more than 10 mph	8	1	1	1	3	n/a	15	18	n/a	19	21	20
Average speed (mph)	51	48	42	48	46	46	42	43	46	43	45	44
Number observed (thousands)	408	33,681	331	5,130	357	1,712	180	148	2,040	231	1,015	1,246

Source: DfT Automatic Traffic Counters
Last updated: July 2013
Next update: July 2014

- 1 Average vehicle speeds from 26 motorway sites.
2 Average vehicle speeds from 7 dual carriageway sites.
3 Average vehicle speeds from 24 single carriageway sites.
4 Goods vehicles 3.5 tonnes gross weight and under.
5 Goods vehicles over 3.5 tonnes gross weight.
6 Speed limit depends on loading which cannot be determined.
7 Motorcycles include mopeds and other types of two wheeled motor vehicles.

Telephone: 020 7944 3095
Email: roadtraff.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Notes & definitions (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/68718/Free_Flow_Speeds_-_Notes_and_definitions.pdf)

The figures in this table are National Statistics.

Speeds have been monitored at 26 motorway sites and 7 dual carriageway sites using Automatic Traffic Counters (ATC), deliberately located where external factors which might restrict driver behaviour are not present (including junctions, hills, sharp bends and speed enforcement cameras). The automatic counters identify rigid 2 axle lorries but cannot distinguish between vehicles weighing less than 7.5 tonnes gross and those weighing more. The weight of this type of vehicle determines its speed limit on non-built-up roads. Consequently, it is not possible to tell how many rigid 2 axle HGVs and total rigid HGVs are speeding. As a result, total HGV free flow speed estimates mentioned in this Impact Assessment exclude Rigid 2-axles from their calculations. Around 36% of the observations made at the motorways sites and 40% of the observations at the dual carriageway sites were Rigid 2-axle HGVs. The speed measurement error of the Automatic Vehicle Classifier hardware used in the region +/-1.5%.

Speed Distribution

Data collected by Automatic Traffic Counters can also be used to show the distribution of vehicle speeds at the ATC site. The graphs below show the distribution of car and HGV speeds on ATC sites at motorways and dual carriageways. The graphs show that there is less variance in HGV speeds than car speeds. This is mostly due to the effect of speed limiters, which prevent HGVs from travelling faster than 56 mph.

