

## Working on the strategic road network/operating from the hard shoulder.

# SafetyAlert

February 2014

### Work activity description:

In January 2015, the Highways Agency received crown censure from HSE, following the tragic death of one of its traffic officers in 2012. This safety alert is published with the intention of sharing the key lessons learnt. It applies to anyone who may be working on the strategic road network and is aimed at ensuring broader lessons can be applied as required.

### Investigation/findings:

1. Always aim to spend as little time as practicable on the hard shoulder, or in/near live traffic conditions. Look to find a place of safety as far away from the live traffic as possible. Where ever possible, stand on the non-traffic side of a nearside barrier and at a safe distance to allow for a barrier strike (at least 1.2 metres if achievable). Consider your surroundings. Stop and think about dangers that may prevail behind a barrier, like ditches, uneven surfaces, fences, cabling, abandoned items, and debris. Where the section of road is elevated, other places of safety will need to be sought.
2. Supervision is an extremely important activity to enable managers to support their people and ensure the safe systems of work in the organisation are being followed. This gives managers and their teams the chance work together to ensure individual performance meets the standards required for the task. It also provides the opportunity to record supervisory activities take place, and provides an auditable record that we are following good management practice.
3. Understanding why H&S is important is fundamental in ensuring people follow the systems introduced for their own safety, rather than merely because the process exists. Good leaders will juggle the often conflicting demands and do not let these detract from the responsibility to look after others, as well as yourself.

### For further information:

For more information about these findings please contact Stew Evans, Business & Operational Risk Assurance on 01707 608 555 or email [stewart.evans@highways.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:stewart.evans@highways.gsi.gov.uk)

### Actions:

- Please ensure that all relevant members of your staff are made aware of this safety alert. Following the advice in the findings will help to make sure everyone goes home safely at the end of their work.
- Consider how the findings might best apply to your own work. Can you help others in their work by providing feedback to help improvement?



### For further information please call

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