



Department
for Transport

Transforming our strategic roads - A summary

December 2014

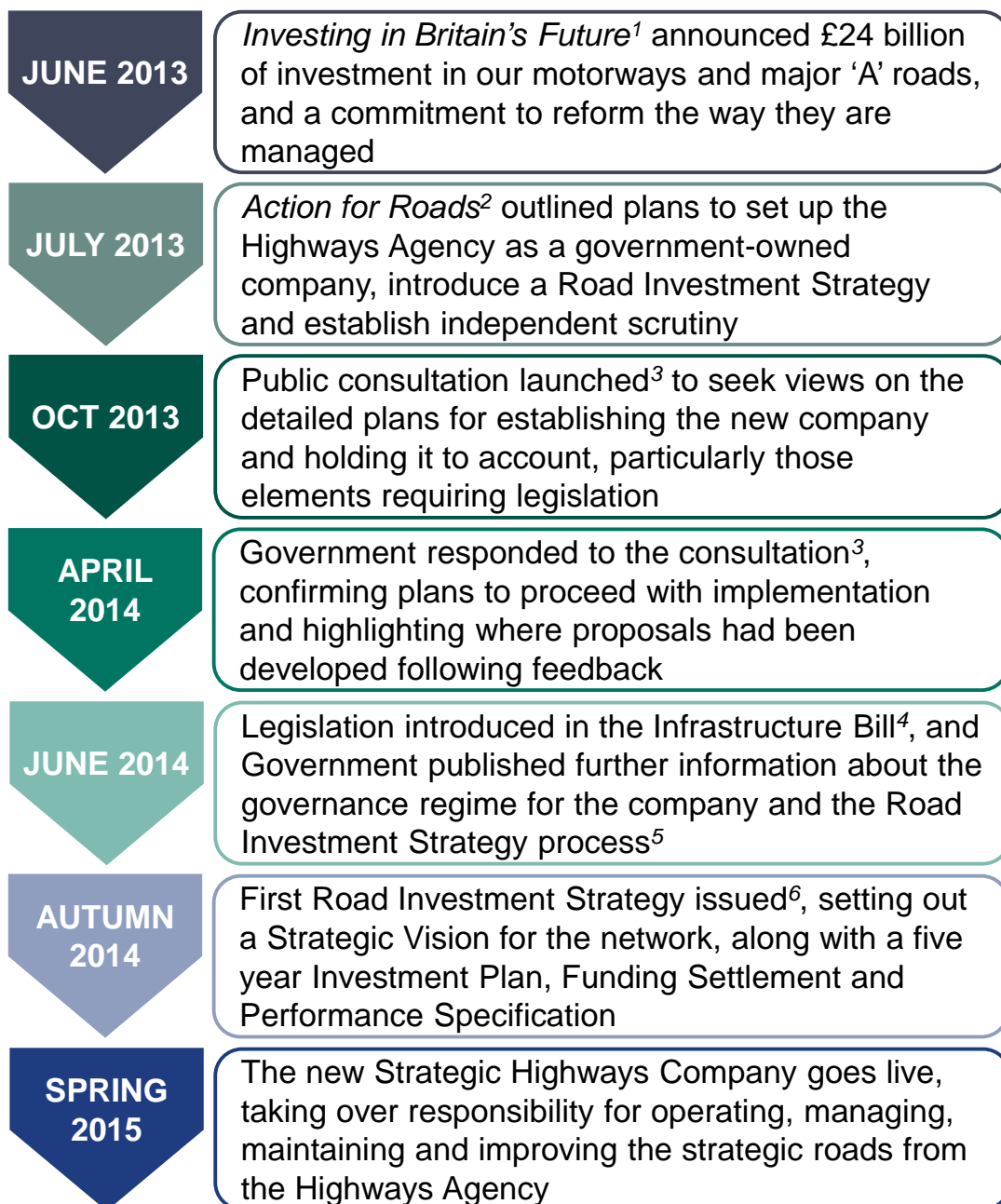
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Introduction

1. Our vision is for a modern strategic road network that supports a modern Britain for generations to come. The network of the future will be smoother, smarter and more sustainable, and give road users the best possible quality of service, while making real differences to safety, economic prosperity, and the natural and built environment.
2. Achieving these aims requires a world-leading public delivery and network operations company that emulates best practice from comparable private sector bodies, delivers faster and more efficiently, provides a better service to customers and gets the best possible value for money for taxpayers from public investment.
3. To this end, we are changing the way the strategic road network is managed and run, by:
 - **Establishing a new, long-term 'Road Investment Strategy' (RIS)**, setting out a clear vision and a stable, long-term plan for the network.
 - **Transforming the Highways Agency into a government-owned Strategic Highways Company**, able to operate more flexibly and efficiently and develop into a world-leading road operator.
 - **Putting in place a robust system of governance for this company**, ensuring that Ministers set the strategic direction for the network, giving the company the autonomy to run the network on a day-to-day basis, while ensuring it can be held to account for its performance and continues to run the network in the public interest.
 - **Setting up an independent watchdog and monitor**, to represent the interests of road users, and to monitor and improve the performance and efficiency of the company.
 - **Introducing legislation to underpin these reforms**, creating the legal framework for the reforms and provide a strong foundation that puts highways investment on a stable footing similar to other sectors.
4. Alongside the reforms, we have committed to a transformational level of investment of £24 billion in the network, providing a long-term commitment to funding and trebling funding for enhancements by 2020.
5. Together, these changes will tackle historic problems of short-term decision making and uncertainty in funding, strengthen delivery and transform how our strategic roads are run. This will ensure more efficient operation and faster delivery, saving the taxpayer at least £2.6 billion over the next ten years. It also means clearer accountability and greater transparency, providing assurance on the spending of public money and ensuring that the network continues to be run in the public interest.
6. This document summarises the reasons for change, what this involves, how the new regime will work and the benefits the change will deliver for road users and the nation as a whole. This is intended to inform consideration of the proposed legislation on roads reform introduced in the Infrastructure Bill.

Timeline



1 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/investing-in-britains-future>

2 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/action-for-roads-a-network-for-the-21st-century>

3 <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/transforming-the-highways-agency-into-a-government-owned-company>

4 <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/infrastructure-bill>

5 <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/roads-reform>

6 <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-investment-strategy>

We face some major challenges on strategic roads

7. Strategic roads - our motorways and major 'A' roads - are vital to all our daily lives and perform a crucial function in supporting jobs and growth. Although representing only 2% of the English road network, these roads carry a third of all traffic and two thirds of all freight traffic.
8. However, our strategic roads must overcome some significant challenges if they are to keep supporting our economy and drive growth:
 - **Stop-start funding:** The Highways Agency (HA) has often not been given a clear and consistent view of the Government's long-term ambitions and policies, and its funding can vary from year to year, making it difficult to plan ahead.
 - **Institutional inefficiencies:** The HA lacks autonomy and flexibility compared to other infrastructure providers, who operate at arms-length from government with greater efficiency and customer focus.
 - **Underinvestment:** Investment in roads has fallen dramatically over recent decades and has failed to keep pace with demand, with many parts of the network still suffering from congestion.
 - **Growing pressures:** Economic growth, a rising population and falling costs of driving means we expect increasing pressure on the network.



Stop-start funding: Short-term changes to annual budgets and the lack of a long-term plan create an unstable delivery environment for the Agency and its supply chain, making it difficult to deliver efficiently.

This hinders their ability to plan ahead, slows delivery and increases costs, for example by preventing the Agency from entering into lower cost long-term contracts with suppliers. Recent evidence shows inefficiencies in the current system of 15-20%.⁷



Institutional inefficiencies: As an executive agency that forms part of central government, the Agency has less flexibility over day-to-day operations, procurement and contract management compared to other infrastructure providers.

In 2011, Alan Cook's report *A Fresh Start for the Strategic Road Network* highlighted that "the unique position of the Agency, and its relationship with government, has failed to reflect the wider interests of our economy", and recommended setting up the Agency as a separate body. International comparisons show that operators in other countries can run their roads more efficiently at arms length, with more certainty and flexibility.

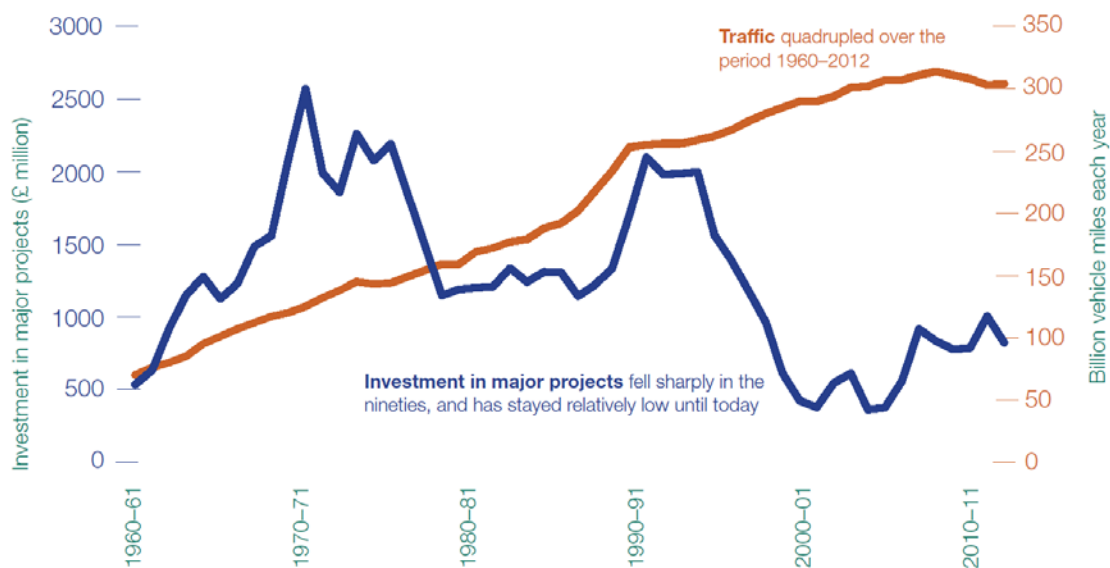
⁷ A Fresh Start for the Strategic Road Network, Alan Cook, November 2011; Infrastructure Cost Review, Infrastructure UK, December 2010; Government Procurement Strategy, Cabinet Office May 2011; European Cost Comparison – Cost differences between English and Dutch Highway Construction, EC Harris and TRL, December 2009.



Underinvestment: Britons drive almost 50 billion miles more than 20 years ago, but spending on major road schemes in England fell dramatically between 1990 and 2001 (see graph). As a result, many parts of the network still suffer from congestion, bottlenecks and inconsistent standards.

This makes it harder for the UK to compete internationally. The network is critical to our global economic competitiveness - research by EEF⁸ has shown that over 60% of overseas investors see good road infrastructure as critical or important to their investment decisions. Our strategic road network is already losing ground to our international competitors, who have continued to invest in their roads. Since 2006-2007, UK road infrastructure has fallen from 14th to 30th in the latest World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Index rankings.⁹

Figure 1 - Spending on major projects has not kept pace with traffic



Investment v Traffic

- Investment in major projects (£ million)
- Billion vehicles miles per year

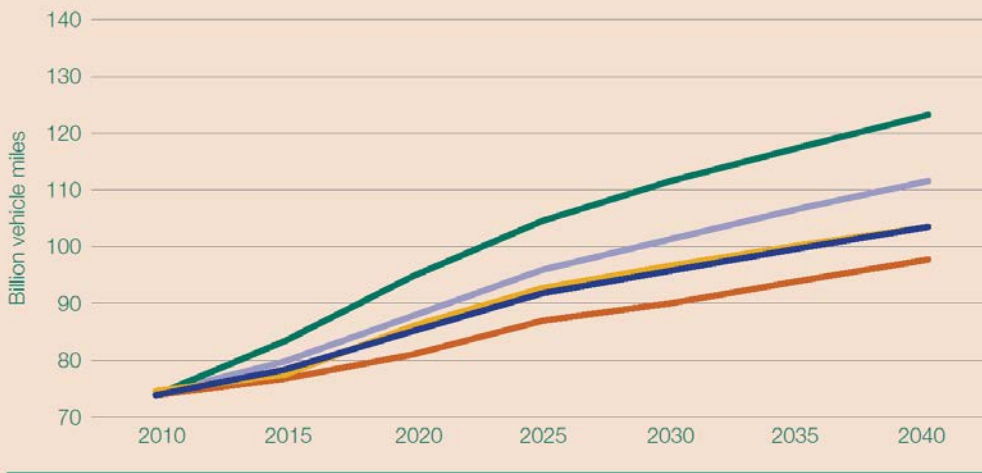
Source: Traffic estimates from DfT Statistics; spending data collected from a range of published government documents and HA spend data. Note that for the spending data, there have been minor changes to the classification of road projects over time.



Growing pressures: The latest statistics show that traffic on the strategic road network continues to grow. Traffic on motorways in England grew by 1.4% in the last year to 56.7 billion vehicle miles travelled – the highest ever level – with traffic volumes on trunk roads estimated to have increased by 14% since 2000.¹⁰

Economic growth, a rising population and falling costs of driving mean we expect traffic demand to continue to increase. Our latest estimates, even under conservative scenarios, show that traffic on strategic roads is expected to grow significantly and will be between 27% and 57% higher in 2040 than it was in 2013.¹¹

Forecast SRN Traffic



Forecast SRN Traffic – England (billion vehicle miles)

- Scenario 1
- Scenario 2
- Scenario 1 (low)
- Scenario 3
- Scenario 1 (high)

Costs of congestion in 2040

Time stuck in traffic for every household each year



Working days lost per year



Annual cost to the freight industry



Source: Road Investment Strategy: Strategic Vision. Projections relate to the high growth scenario from DfT road transport forecasts.

¹⁰ Road Traffic Estimates in Great Britain: 2013, Department for Transport, June 2014. 14% figure is based on a comparison on a road network similar to that in 2013 for all years.

11 DfT National Transport Model analysis. Full details of this work will be published soon as part of the next update to the Department's road transport forecasts.

We are addressing these challenges by changing the way strategic roads are managed and run

We have issued the first 'Road Investment Strategy' (RIS):

- Sets out a stable, long-term plan for the strategic road network.
- Provides a clear strategic vision for the network, transparent performance and investment requirements, and stable funding.
- This will create far more certain conditions for investment - enabling the company and its suppliers to plan ahead and gear up for delivery, supporting the economy, jobs and skills.

We are turning the HA into a government-owned strategic highways company (SHC):

- Establishing the Agency as a separate legal entity, more independent from government, ensures that its relationship with government is transparent, the funding settlement is robust and opens the way for a clear 'performance contract' through the Road Investment Strategy.
- The company will have the legal powers and duties to run the roads, with day-to-day flexibility to deliver more efficiently and effectively.
- Enables the company to undertake the organisation and culture change to meet the step change demanded to deliver an ambitious investment programme and develop into a world-leading operator.
- Allows government to remain focused on exercising strategic control.

We are putting in place a robust system of governance for this company:

- Ministers continue to set the strategic direction for the network.
- Ensures the company acts transparently, remains accountable to Parliament, government, road users and taxpayers, and continues to run the network in the public interest.
- Provides the means for Ministers to exercise strategic control over the company and intervene if it is underperforming or failing to deliver.

We are setting up an independent watchdog and monitor:

- Transport Focus (the new name of Passenger Focus) will represent the interests of road users.
- A 'Strategic Road Network Monitor' in the Office of Rail Regulation will scrutinise performance and efficiency of the company.

We are introducing legislation to underpin these reforms:

- The Infrastructure Bill introduces legislation to create the legal framework for these reforms.
- Underpins the RIS, providing a strong foundation that puts highways investment on a similarly stable footing to other infrastructure sectors.

We are also investing record amounts in our strategic roads through the first Road Investment Strategy

With the first Road Investment Strategy (RIS), we are delivering a network that will underpin our nation's prosperity and progress for generations to come:

- Providing **certainty**, investing over £15 billion from 2015/16 - 2020/21
- Transforming **connectivity**, through the likes of our commitment to dual the A303 to the South West
- Increasing **capacity**, including delivering 1,300 additional lane miles
- Improving the **condition** of the SRN, including resurfacing 80%
- Enabling **construction** and creating jobs, with almost £5 billion invested in 50 schemes that will help connect housing sites, enterprise zones and other industrial developments.

127 schemes in RIS	84 wholly new schemes	69 wholly new schemes to enter construction this roads period
20 feasibility study schemes	1300 additional lane miles	
12 expressways created (9 new)	29 smart m'ways (8 new)	63 junction upgrade schemes (37 new) schemes may involve multiple junctions
5 Key airport links upgraded	7 Major ports helped	50 schemes directly supporting housing and growth
Biggest single scheme: A14 Huntingdon to Cambridge - £1.5bn		Biggest new scheme: A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down (Stonehenge tunnel)

2015-2021		Overall	
£15.2bn	Capital committed over this road period	£15.7bn	Total value of all major schemes
£9.4bn	Spending on major improvements in period (<i>£6bn existing commitments, £3.4bn new commitments</i>)	£9.4bn	Total value of all newly announced schemes
£900m	Ringfenced funds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £300m environment (inc. £75m for noise) • Further £100m air quality fund • £250m cycling, safety & integration (inc. £100m for cycling) • £150m innovation (est. £40m for driverless cars research) • £100m growth & housing 	£3.5bn	Schemes from feasibility studies
£4.4bn	For major maintenance & renewals (<i>excludes an additional £1.8bn Resource funding for day to day maintenance</i>)	£4.8bn	Schemes in the North
£0.5bn	To address emerging priorities in period and fund staff to design, manage and deliver schemes		

46m	Hours per year saved by 2030
11400	Average # of construction jobs supported per year by the investment plan

The governance arrangements for the Strategic Highways Company will be made up of several elements that will work together in a robust system








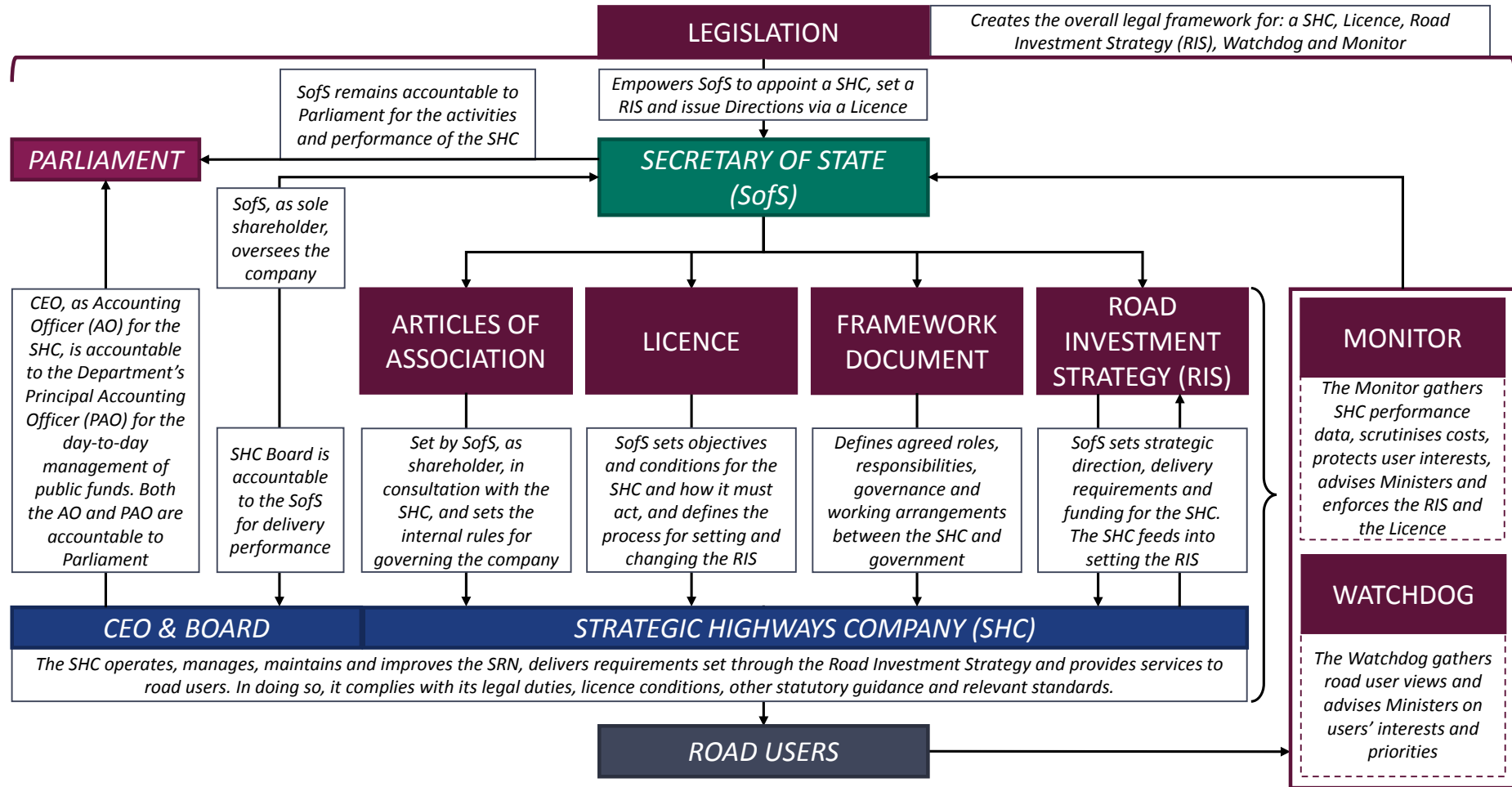





 <p>Legislation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates legal framework for a Strategic Highways Company (SHC), including powers and duties, as well as for a Road Investment Strategy (RIS) • Empowers Secretary of State to appoint and direct a SHC, and transfer assets
 <p>Licence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Means for Secretary of State to issue statutory directions to a SHC • Sets objectives and conditions around how the company must act, including how it exercises its statutory functions as well as any restrictions
 <p>RIS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets Government's long-term vision for the SRN, with a multi-year performance specification, investment plan, and funding settlement • Once established, can be revisited by exception - subject to due process and consultation
 <p>Framework Document</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defines roles, responsibilities and day-to-day ways of working between SHC and government • Defines principles and processes for oversight, sponsorship, monitoring and approvals – including around governance, finance and project controls
 <p>Articles of Association</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets internal rules for governing a SHC, agreed between the company and the Secretary of State • Includes Board arrangements and responsibilities, commercial flexibility or restrictions and any reserve powers for the Secretary of State
 <p>Watchdog</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathers the views of road users and provides advice to the Secretary of State about their views and priorities for the network • A dedicated unit working within Transport Focus, acting as an advocate for all road users
 <p>Monitor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitors, scrutinises and reports on the costs, performance and efficiency of the SHC to the Secretary of State • A semi-autonomous part of the Office of Rail Regulation, which will work solely on roads

Figure 2 - Overview of how the governance system will work for a Strategic Highways Company








This system of governance will define and safeguard the fulfilment of important responsibilities by the Strategic Highways Company






Road safety

 <p>Legislation</p>	<p>The SHC will be subject to the same legal obligations in respect of road safety as other highway authorities. This includes existing duties under the Highways Act 1980, as well as relevant Health and Safety legislation. The SofS will be legally bound to consider safety in setting the RIS.</p>
 <p>Licence</p>	<p>The Licence sets clear obligations for the SHC to protect and improve the safety of the network. This includes requirements to embed safety into its decision-making, consider safety at all levels of operations, ensure the best practicable safety outcomes across its activities and engage with wider efforts to improve road safety.</p>
 <p>RIS</p>	<p>The RIS sets a clear long-term road safety vision for the number of deaths or serious injuries on the SRN to be approaching zero by 2040, and a specific target for the SHC to deliver a 40% reduction in deaths and serious injuries by 2020, against which the SHC's performance will be monitored and assessed.</p>
 <p>Watchdog</p>	<p>Transport Focus will represent the interests and views of all road users, including walkers and cyclists, and will have a vital role in commenting on road safety issues. This includes having a strong voice in the process for setting the Road Investment Strategy.</p>
 <p>Monitor</p>	<p>The Strategic Road Network Monitor will measure and report on the performance of the SHC in meeting its legal duties and delivering the requirements of the Licence and the Road Investment Strategy. This includes holding the SHC to account for its performance on safety.</p>






Environment and sustainability

 <p>Legislation</p>	<p>The SHC will be subject to extensive existing legislation on environmental issues. This includes the continued need for major road improvement schemes to go through a robust environmental assessment and decision-making process. The SofS will be legally bound to consider the environment in setting the RIS.</p>
 <p>Licence</p>	<p>The Licence sets clear obligations for the SHC to protect and enhance the environment, contribute towards reducing emissions and adapt to climate change. This includes embedding these concerns at all levels of decision-making and operations and following principles of good design and sustainable development.</p>
 <p>RIS</p>	<p>The RIS will drive improvements in environmental outcomes through the requirements in the Performance Specification and ring-fenced funding in the Investment Plan – including £300m for environmental improvements, and a further £100m for air quality – which will be used to monitor and assess the SHC's performance.</p>
 <p>Watchdog</p>	<p>Transport Focus will represent the views and interests of all road users, and will highlight the environmental issues that are of most concern to them. This is particularly relevant for walkers and cyclists. These views will play a major part in shaping the Road Investment Strategy.</p>
 <p>Monitor</p>	<p>The Strategic Road Network Monitor will assess the SHC's performance in meeting with its environmental obligations – its legal duties, Licence requirements and the improvements demanded in the RIS. Where there are failures, it will be able to hold the SHC to account and take formal enforcement action.</p>

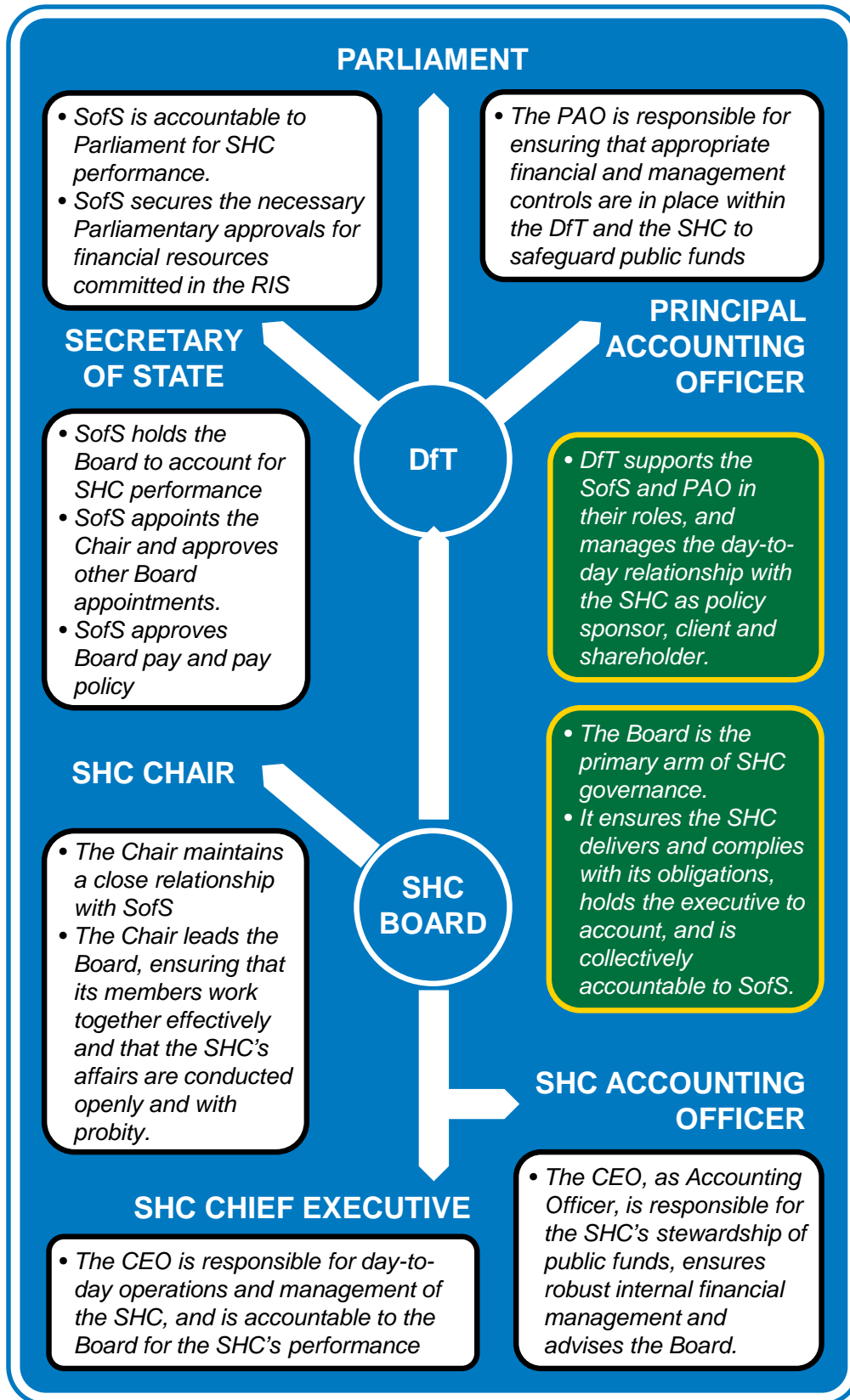
Cooperation

 <p>Legislation</p>	<p>The SHC will be subject to the general duties under the Traffic Management Act 2004, which require the company to work with others to keep traffic moving on their network and facilitate the movement of traffic on other networks. It will also be required to cooperate as a statutory consultee under the planning process.</p>
 <p>Licence</p>	<p>The Licence sets clear obligations for the SHC to cooperate with and consult others. This includes defining the main reasons for cooperation, the key groups that the SHC must cooperate and consult with, and the expected behaviours that the company must demonstrate in cooperating with others.</p>
 <p>RIS</p>	<p>Route strategies will be the primary inputs in the setting of the RIS by Ministers, and must take account of local transport, economic, housing and other plans in identifying investment needs and priorities for the SRN. The SHC will be required to actively collaborate and engage with others to develop these.</p>
 <p>Watchdog</p>	<p>Road users care when connections between road networks are not working as well as they should, or traffic disruption is not being dealt with effectively. Transport Focus will capture this when gathering views from road users through their surveys, and will be able to warn if cooperation is breaking down.</p>
 <p>Monitor</p>	<p>As part of assessing and reporting on the SHC's performance, the Strategic Road Network Monitor will hold the SHC to account for the extent and effectiveness of its cooperation with others in carrying out its functions – including in developing route strategies, and in complying with the requirements of the Licence.</p>

Efficiency and value for money

 <p>Licence</p>	<p>The Licence sets clear obligations on the SHC with regard to maximising efficiency and value for money, and minimising long-term costs. This includes the need to adopt a whole-life cost approach to asset management and put in place robust arrangements for the internal assurance of value for money.</p>
 <p>RIS</p>	<p>In setting delivery requirements and associated funding for the SHC for a Road Period, the RIS will factor in demanding efficiency requirements, as well as clear expectations in respect of value for money. The first RIS sets an expectation on the SHC to deliver £1.2 billion efficiency savings over the first Road Period.</p>
 <p>Framework Document</p>	<p>The Framework Document plays a crucial role in safeguarding efficiency and value for money. It defines the principles, processes and conditions of the SHC's use of public funds, as well as the roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability to Parliament for the SHC's stewardship of public money.</p>
 <p>Watchdog</p>	<p>Transport Focus will be able to link up discussions about value for money with the wider question of what matters to different groups of road users. This will inform wider assessments of value for money, and make sure that efficiency concerns are considered in the context of the experience of road users on the ground.</p>
 <p>Monitor</p>	<p>The Strategic Road Network Monitor performs the primary role in scrutinising the costs, performance and efficiency of the SHC, reporting to the Secretary of State and publishing reports on how the SHC is delivering. The Monitor will have legal powers to force the company to take action on its recommendations.</p>

The company will be a separate corporate entity, which has clear lines of accountability to government



Ministers remain clearly accountable to Parliament, and can intervene if the company is failing to deliver

Ministers will remain accountable to Parliament for the way the roads are run, and the activities and performance of the company, for example by:

- Answering oral and written questions and making oral and written statements.
- Responding to debates and giving evidence to Parliamentary select committees as required.
- Securing Parliamentary approval for financial resources in the RIS and laying the company's Accounts before Parliament each year.

Ministers will exercise strategic control over the company, through:

- Setting strategic direction and clear, transparent performance and delivery requirements for the company through the RIS
- Issuing statutory Directions and Guidance to the company to shape how the company must act and go about delivering its requirements.
- Issuing statutory Guidance to the Monitor in providing independent scrutiny of the company's efficiency and performance.

Parliament, road users and taxpayers will be able to more effectively scrutinise performance and hold the company to account for delivery:

- The RIS provides a clear 'performance contract' against which the company's performance can be monitored and assessed.
- The company's Strategic Business Plan and annual reports will track progress and allow it to be held to account for failures to deliver.

Incentives and sanctions will be available to Ministers to manage the company's performance and address any failures to deliver, including:

- Increasing scrutiny and oversight of company activities, for example by introducing additional reporting requirements.
- Reducing or suspending of some of the company's autonomy.
- Issuing additional statutory Directions to the company to take specific action or implement specific policies.
- Approval of any incentives regime for executive directors, senior management, and/or staff.

The Secretary of State, as sole shareholder, will also be able to ensure that the company is led and governed appropriately, for example by:

- Changing the Articles of Association.
- Approving Board pay and overall pay policy.
- Reserving certain decisions, rather than leaving them to the Board.
- Having the power to remove some or all of the Board.

The Monitor & Watchdog will ensure the company delivers for road users and for taxpayers

We are creating two discrete functions – a **Monitor** and a **Watchdog** – which will gather information on the performance of the new company and produce regular, published advice to the Secretary of State.

This will create an unprecedented level of transparency about how well the strategic road network – and its operator – are performing, and have a dramatic effect in driving greater efficiency, ensuring accountability and improving performance.

A separate published document, *Transparency for Roads: creating the watchdog and monitor*,¹² sets out the roles of the Monitor and Watchdog in greater detail.



The **Monitor** will be based in the Office of Rail Regulation, which has extensive experience of monitoring performance in the rail sector. It will:

- *Monitor and assess the company's performance and efficiency in delivering the RIS requirements, including against relevant metrics*
- *Provide advice on setting the RIS*
- *Monitor the company's approach to asset management*
- *Have the regulatory power to sanction the company, including levying fines, where necessary to address poor performance.*



The **Watchdog** role will be carried out within Transport Focus, which has dealt with transport user interests for over sixty years. It will:

- *Gather the views of SRN users, including through large-scale surveys, bring them together and provide clear advice about their views and priorities for the network*
- *Provide advice on setting the RIS.*
- *Act as an advocate for all road users, including businesses, cyclists and private motorists*
- *Promote change across the roads sector*

By working together, the Monitor and Watchdog will be more effective at holding the new company to account - each will be able to focus on the areas where they have expertise.

For example, on safety issues Passenger Focus already has experience of gathering views of transport users, and are well-placed to see what road users think makes roads safe. Meanwhile, ORR is well placed to analyse the evidence about whether the company's actions to improve safety are working.

Together, the two bodies will provide a comprehensive and transparent system of oversight, better serving the interests of users.

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/roads-reform>

Together, investment and reform will deliver major benefits for roads users, taxpayers and the economy



Efficiency: Greater funding certainty and a more strategic relationship with government will enable lower-cost, longer-term approaches that are estimated to deliver efficiencies of 15-20% and secure savings for taxpayers of at least £2.6 billion over ten years



Acceleration: Providing the company with clear, strategic plans set out over five years, and greater independence and flexibility over delivery, will enable better prioritisation and faster delivery



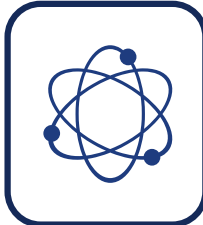
Accountability: A robust and transparent 'performance contract' with government and a system of independent scrutiny means lines of accountability are clear, and the company can be publicly held to account and sanctioned for any failures to deliver



Transparency: Road users will be represented independently for the first time, and together with taxpayers will have greater visibility of requirements for the company and information about its performance, and be better able to hold the company to account



Quality outcomes: Fast and efficient delivery of record levels of investment will improve the quality of our infrastructure, resulting in roads that are smarter, better maintained, safer, more resilient and designed to work better for the environment and communities



Innovation: Flexibility for the company to determine the most cost-effective ways to deliver outcomes will incentivise innovative approaches, whether in terms of use of new technology or alternative solutions to solving problems on the network

Together, this will deliver a better service to road users and better value for taxpayers: Users will see the benefits of major investment, alongside a more customer-focused operator, through more reliable journeys, reduced congestion, better information, less delay and disruption and a better user experience – and taxpayers will benefit from more efficient delivery and significant savings

Appendix - Q&A

Q. Why is it necessary to reform the Highways Agency?

- Transforming the Agency is an essential part of delivering a step change in the performance of our road network. The reform is crucial to securing the efficiencies from stable, long-term funding and planning, and developing a world-leading delivery body. As well as providing greater flexibility to the operator over day-to-day delivery, establishing the Agency as a legally-separate company, clearly independent from government, ensures that the relationship between central government and the operator is transparent, that the funding settlement for the operator is robust, and opens the way for a clear 'performance contract' through the Road Investment Strategy.

Q. Why do these changes require legislation?

- Legislation will create the necessary legal framework for reforms, making the new company legally responsible for operating, managing, maintaining and improving the network. It also ensures Government will set clear performance requirements and provide a predictable funding settlement with which to achieve this. This will create far more certain conditions for investment, enabling the operator and its suppliers to plan ahead and gear up for delivery, including investing more in people and skills.

Q. Is this about privatising roads?

- Absolutely not. We are turning the Highways Agency into a company that is 100% owned by the government. The company will remain in the public sector and we are using legislation to guarantee this.

Q. What measures will there be to stop big pay rises?

- It will be important to ensure that the new company is appropriately resourced. If we are serious about delivering a step change in performance and efficiency, we will need to attract and motivate the talent to deliver it. Government, as the shareholder, will approve Board pay and pay policy, will specifically agree any high salaries or incentive arrangements, and ensure that any remuneration and reward structure is acceptable and delivers value for money. There is no question of the company being able to award itself large pay rises or bonuses.

Q. Will the RIS set stretching targets for the new company?

- We have set challenging and achievable targets for the company. This includes establishing baselines for some metrics, where appropriate. The monitor will be able to use the metrics and targets to

judge how successful the company has been. More detail is provided in the RIS documents issued on 1 December 2014.

Q. How will the RIS balance the responsibilities of Ministers and certainty for the new strategic highways company?

- The RIS will provide much-needed stability to the operator and suppliers about Government's requirements and future funding. This creates far more predictable conditions for investment, allowing them to plan ahead, invest in capacity and drive down costs. Ministers will remain central to the process, and each Parliament will have the opportunity to shape the RIS for the next period. This approach has worked successfully for rail over the last ten years, and has led to a transformation in the quality of the network. As with rail, Ministers will be able to vary the RIS, should policy change significantly, subject to due process to ensure there is appropriate consultation and transparency for any changes.

Q. How does the RIS support integrated transport planning?

- The RIS has been informed by route strategies, carried out in collaboration with local stakeholders. In the future, these will determine the nature, need and timing for future investment, and ensure that all interventions account for wider transport networks, local plans and priorities. This bottom-up, evidence-based approach means local priorities for growth will be supported, national and local needs are balanced, and decisions about road and other transport investment can be more joined up. It will also enable the company to collaborate with adjacent authorities to consider what initiatives or options for intervention off the SRN can improve the performance of the network.

Q. Is the Monitor a formal roads regulator?

- The Monitor will not be an economic regulator, since roads remain free to use and there are no prices to regulate. However, it will use most of the tools of an independent regulator, and will have the ability to carry out independent enforcement activity. This means it will be able to hold the company to full account for honouring the Licence and for performance in delivering the RIS.

Q. Will the Watchdog represent the views of all road users, including cyclists and freight?

- The watchdog will consider a wide range of views representing all categories of road users, not just motorists. Freight and business users are essential to understanding the economic impact of the network, while motorcyclists, cyclists and pedestrians are central to any understanding of network safety. Passenger Focus are already working to understand different user perspectives, and their stakeholder panel will represent the full range of road users to make sure that the watchdog's priorities match with the experiences of all.