

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Highways England
Bridge House
1 Walnut Tree Close
Guildford, GU1 4LZ

1 February 2017

[REDACTED]
I am writing to confirm that we have now completed our search for the information which you requested.

1. Please confirm the actual dates that clear and visible signage was installed, and was present and visible to all drivers entering said road on 30 March 2016, advising a Variable Speed Limit (VSL) is in operation on the entry slip roads at Junction 22 and Junction 21A to the M25 counter clockwise. Please support your confirmation of this request with photographic evidence showing Highways England signage. I confirm this signage does not exist to this day at J21A.

The signs for start of VSL were installed during Autumn 2014 and completed in early December 2014. The only sign that has been missing is at J22 entry slip, B carriageway and this will be rectified by our service provider, a temporary sign is currently in place. Two recent photos of the B entry slips are attached.

2. Is Highways England responsible for enforcing and maintaining all the VSL signage relevant to your VSL cameras? If not, who is?

Highways England is not an enforcement authority, speed enforcement is undertaken by the police. Our service provider maintains the infrastructure on the M25, including VSL signage, on behalf of Highways England. The current service provider for the M25 is Connect Plus. For an enquiry that relates to an alleged speeding offence the relevant police force is the correct authority to contact. The presence of signage for start of VSL has no relevance to an alleged speeding offence.

3. Please confirm the government legislation by name, publication and date of most recent publication that allows Highways England to notify some drivers using significant parts of the M25, e.g. J10/A3, with over-bearing large copious HIGHLY VISIBLE TO ALL MOTORISTS amounts of VARIABLE SPEED LIMIT signage on the M25 clockwise, on entry to the M25 at J10/A3 and on exit from the M25 clockwise after J10, VERSES NO VARIABLE SPEED LIMIT signage at all to all drivers on the M25, on entry to the M25 and on exit from the M25 counter clockwise between Junctions 21A entry slip road and Junctions 18 (and maybe as far as J12) ? Please provide access to this publication?

The government legislation relevant to the M25 J20-19 location is No 2013/3167: The M25 Motorway (Junctions 16 to 23) (Variable Speed Limits) Regulations 2013.

The text refers to a speed limit sign to diagram 670, which is used to indicate the beginning of a maximum speed limit shown within a red roundel, as to be found when variable speed limits are displayed on gantries and MS4 signals on smart motorways.

As a reminder to motorists that they are within an area in which cameras are used to enforce speed limits, signs to diagram 879 (an image of a camera) are found on many of the gantries along smart motorways.

4. Please confirm at what actual time on 30 March 2016 was Highways England advised there was an obstruction between J18 and J20 counter clockwise of the M25?

What was said obstruction that required the implementation of VSL signage when traffic was extremely light?

How was the obstruction to traffic on the M25 removed and by who?

What time was the obstruction removed?

What time were the VSL mandatory lowered speed limits relating to this obstruction removed?

Log details from the road traffic control centre:

1:23pm - M25 J19 HGV with tyre blow-out on the hard shoulder, but it is parked protruding into lane 1. CCTV confirmed this.

1.25pm - 50's were set on 5170B-5157B.

1.42pm - Lane divert arrows were set and rolling road block was put in place.

1.53pm - HGV moved to safer location by Traffic Officer vehicle (repositioned on the hard shoulder so no longer in lane 1 and road block was released).

1.55pm - Signals were cleared.

Reduced speed limits and 'Obstruction Slow Down' message signs were displayed between junction 20 and half way between junctions 19 and 18 anti-clockwise.

The reduced speed limit sequence at the enforcement gantry was:

1:25pm 50mph

1:57pm 60mph

3:51pm national speed limit resumed

More information about smart motorways

Further information about smart motorways, including variable speed limits, can be found online:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-drive-on-a-smart-motorway>

If you are unhappy with the way we have handled your request you may ask for an internal review. Our internal review process is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/highways-england/about/complaints-procedure>

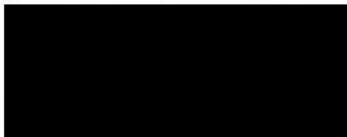
If you require a print copy, please phone the Information Line on 0300 123 5000 or email info@highwaysengland.co.uk. You should contact me if you wish to complain.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote reference number 16593 in any future communications.

Yours sincerely



Operations South-East – correspondence team