

Our ref: CRS 756765

Highways England
2nd Floor
Bridge House
1 Walnut Tree Close
Guildford GU1 4LZ

Email:

5 December 2017

Dear

Roadworks at M25/M23 Junction

I am writing to confirm that we have now completed our search for the information, which you requested on 7 November via [redacted] from the Department of Transport. Your request has been dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I will answer each of your requests for information as follows:

What diversions were in place to protect the workforce (who were floodlit and in high visibility jackets) in the road at the M25/M23 Junction at 04.45 hrs on Friday 4 August 2017 where drivers who were travelling from the east along the M25 turned south onto the M23?

Having investigated this query we can confirm that this was an emergency closure due to a road traffic collision that took place on 03/08/2017 at 20:55, rather than a closure due to roadworks. As it was an emergency there was no diversion put in place via hard signage.

A vehicle rolled and left the road going over the safety barrier and landed on its side. A grab lorry was necessary to recover the vehicle. The slip road was closed for the recovery.

The time line of the event is as follows below:

- At 21:11 a Traffic Officer unit arrived on scene.
- At 22:16 the need to establish a full closure was agreed under Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual.
- At 03:27 on 04/08/2017 the lane closure was set on the overhead signals with the message sign "Roadworks" instead of "Incident" which appears to have been an operator error for which we apologise.
- At 04:36 Regional Control Centre (RCC) set a message sign "Exit closed at J7".

- At 04:38 National Traffic Operations Centre (NTOC) were informed of the closure and they set widespread message signs across the network stating “M25 J7 Exit Closed”.
- At 04:57 vehicle recovery now completed.
- At 05:38 the closure was removed.

How were motorists wanting to travel South on the M23, travelling from the East on the M25 that morning, supposed to join the M23?

Drivers would have had to turn around at the next junction, Junction 8, return towards the M23 and travel South via the exit slips. However, there is no capability for our systems to specify this diversion on an electronic signage in an emergency.

Is there a legal obligation that plans for roadworks that are to take place on motorways be lodged with the Department of Transport before the roadworks commence?

No, there is no legal obligation that plans for roadworks that are to take place on motorways be lodged with the Department of Transport before the roadworks commence. This also applies to incidents on the network.

If you are unhappy with the way we have handled your request you may ask for an internal review within 2 months of the date of this response for Freedom of Information requests and within 40 days for Environmental Information Regulations requests.

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 e-mail 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 CRS 756765 in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

