

Our ref: 757 202

[REDACTED]  
Highways England  
Bridge House  
Walnut Tree Close  
Guildford  
GU1 4LZ  
[www.highways.gov.uk](http://www.highways.gov.uk)

21 December 2017

Dear [REDACTED]

We have now completed our search for the information you requested in your email of the 25 November regarding preparation and actions made for Black Friday (24 November) around Dartford and Thurrock. Your request has been dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please see below your questions and our answers:

**Were there any preparations made for Black Friday (24 Nov 2017) around the Dartford/Thurrock area?**

The South East Emergency Planning Team had discussions with our service provider, Connect Plus, to review all operations and resources to ensure that sufficient resources were in place and that any non-critical programmes were cancelled over the Black Friday / Cyber Monday weekend, to ensure that the required service level was at an acceptable operational level.

**Were there any specific meetings scheduled prior to the event?**

There weren't any specific meetings scheduled relating to this event.

**Were any additional staff brought in to cover the day?**

The Traffic Officer Service Managers reviewed their on road resources over this weekend and it was felt they had sufficient numbers during this period.

**What was the outcome of such preparations (are the minutes available)?**

Highways England South East declared a Regional Alert and issued a briefing note (please see attached), detailing what action would take place.

**What (re-)actions were taken on the day itself to alleviate congestion (were officers sent to any particular locations to direct traffic)?**

Dartford Outstation had 52 Traffic officers rostered for duties on Friday 24th Nov covering the crossing and network activity from 06:00am to 06:00am Saturday 25th

November. Crossing numbers were not anticipated to significantly increase over normal levels as Friday is a peak travel day for the crossing. Crossing numbers were marginally increased (+964) from Thursday 23rd but decreased (-2995) when compared to the previous Friday 17th.

Traffic officers do not direct traffic however they were deployed as required managing incidents on the HE network.

**Were traffic signal timings changed to help ease the flow other than normal everyday procedures such as using VMS and tweeting?**

The traffic signal timings weren't changed outside of the normal business as usual requirements.

This system uses sensors in the road to detect incidents or congestion, and then automatically sets reduced speeds. It collects real-time data such as vehicle count, speed and traffic density, which means that it will be constantly monitoring the flow of traffic and adjusting the speed limit in order to maintain a safe flow.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote reference number [757 202] in any future communications.

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 e-mail [info@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto: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

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted name]

[Redacted title]

[Redacted contact information]