

ROAD ISSUES

1) SETTING LOCAL SPEED LIMITS

The Scottish Government, following on from The Department for Transport, issued ETLLD Circular No. 1/2006 in 2006. The Circular requires Traffic Authorities to review their A and B Class road network with a view to adjusting speed restrictions to achieve a safe, integrated and reliable transport network. Traffic Authorities were asked to review the speed limits on all their A and B roads in accordance with this guidance.

- Key Features:-

- Speed limits set in isolation, or that are unrealistically low, are likely to be ineffective and lead to possible disrespect for the speed limit. As well as requiring significant and avoidable enforcement costs, this may also result in substantial numbers of drivers continuing to travel at unacceptable speeds, thus increasing the risk of accidents and injuries.
- It is important that Traffic Authorities involve the Police at an early stage and work closely with them during the assessments and introduction of any changes.
- Alternative speed management options should always be considered before a new speed limit is introduced.
- The underlying aim should be to achieve a safe distribution of speeds which reflects the function of the road and impacts on the community. The needs of vulnerable road users must be fully taken into account.
- What the road looks like to road users should be a key factor when setting a speed limit.
- Mean speeds should be used to determine local speed limits. This reflects what the majority of drivers perceive as an appropriate speed to be driven for the road.
- The minimum length of a speed limit should generally not be less than 600 metres to avoid too many changes of speed limit along a route.
- Speed limits should not be used to attempt to solve the problem of isolated hazards, such as a single road junction or reduced forward visibility such as a bend.

- Main Considerations:-
 - A study of types of accidents, their severity, causes and frequency, together with a survey of traffic speeds, should indicate whether an existing speed limit is appropriate for the type of road and mix of use by different groups of road users, or whether it needs to be changed.
 - The principal aim in determining appropriate speed limits should be to provide a consistent message between the road geometry and environment and for changes in speed limit to reflect changes in the road layout and characteristics. The following will be important factors when considering what is an appropriate speed limit:
 - § road function (strategic, through traffic, local access etc.)
 - § road geometry (width, sightlines, bends, junctions and accesses etc.)
 - § road environment (rural, residential, shop frontages, schools etc.)
 - § level of adjacent development, and
 - § traffic composition (including existing and potential levels of pedestrian and cycle usage).
 - Settlements vary in their nature, location and size, the guidelines recommend that settlements should be considered as villages when there are 20 or more properties fronting the road in a distance of 600m, consideration can be given where the number of properties is slightly lower but there is a shop or pub or church on the road. These can be considered to count as more than one unit where appropriate.
 - Where a settlement does not match the criteria above but a Traffic Authority considers that other factors warrant consideration, intermediate limits such as 40 mph or 50 mph can be considered.
 - All speed limits require the promotion of Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO), the statutory process must be followed before any TRO can be made.

In Mid Argyll Kintyre and Islay, consideration of the traffic volumes, the accident record and the mean speeds across the A & B class roads (excluding Trunk Roads) found that injury accidents are relatively infrequent and the general traffic volumes are low. In determining the number of injury accidents in relation to the numbers of vehicle/miles travelled all routes were significantly below the recommended threshold of 35 injury accidents/100 million/vehicle kilometres. From this position it was decided to look at the areas where injury accidents were most prevalent and also consider where non-injury accidents were higher than normal.

The only site that was identified on the A & B route network in MAKI was on the A819 approach to Inveraray. The change in nature of the road after Electric Cottage has caught out a significant number of drivers and resulted in a number of serious accidents. It is anticipated that the proposed 40 mph limit on this section will be confirmed early in the New Year.

Transport Scotland's proposals for changes to the Trunk Roads Network have been assessed in accordance with the Scottish Government's ETLLED Circular No. 1/2006: Setting Local Speed Limits and are shown in appendix A.

2) A83 CROSSING POINT – KINTYRE WAY

A budget of £3,000 has been set aside to improve the 'Kintyre Way' crossing point on the A83 Campbeltwon Road just south of Tayinloan. Works will mainly consist of improving visibility, for both motorists and pedestrians by removing the roadside hedge and improving road signing.

Works are programmed to be carried out in February next year. A sketch of the proposed works is attached in Appendix B.

3) A83 REST AND BE THANKFUL

Work to improve the Old Military Road, which will be used as an emergency route for A83 trunk road traffic in the event of a road closure, is ongoing. Works, on the land which is in private ownership, started on 14 November 2012; this followed the signing of a formal legal agreement with the landowner on the same day. At the time of the announcement by Transport Scotland, completion of the new road was expected to take between nine and twelve weeks, so completion of the road is expected to be in early 2013.

The first two phases of work (some £550,000 to install debris flow netting on the hillside) is complete, with £750,000 allocated for phases three and four which will provide landslip mitigation measures with capacity for nearly 1500 cubic metres of material at key risk points along the hillside. Including the new road, this brings total investment on the latest raft of mitigation work to over £3.7 million.

A meeting of the A83 Rest and Be Thankful Taskforce will take place today (Friday 14 December 2012). The November Taskforce Newsletter is attached in Appendix C – further information should be available shortly at the address provided in the newsletter.

For further information please contact: Stewart Clark, Roads Performance Manager on 01546 604893.

APPENDIX A

Speed Limit Decreases

Road	Section	Guidance recommended speed limit	Current Limit (MPH)	Proposed Limit (MPH)
A828	Creagan Bridge to Appin	50	60	50
A828	Appin to Portnacroish	60	60	50
A83	Furnace to Cumladden	50	60	50
A83	Cumladden	50	60	50
A83	Ardrishaig south to Tarbert	50	60	50
A85	Taynuilt to Connel east	50	60	50

Speed Limit Increases

Road	Section	Guidance recommended speed limit	Current Limit (MPH)	Proposed Limit (MPH)
A85	Lochawe	40	30	40
A85	Taynuilt	40	30	40

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX C