

Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

## Police Liaison Unit Welsh Government, Cathays Park

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<b>Author:</b>	Collated by Inspector Mark Davies, Police Liaison- on behalf of all four welsh police forces
<b>Title:</b>	Welsh Police Response into Inquiry into value for money of Motorway and Trunk Road Investment
<b>Version:</b>	V2
<b>Summary:</b>	Please see attached a written response to the Public Accounts Committee looking into the value for money of Motorway and Trunk Road Investment
<b>Circulation list:</b>	<a href="mailto:leanne.hatcher@assembly.wales">leanne.hatcher@assembly.wales</a>
<b>Authorised by:</b>	Chief Superintendent Alun Thomas
<b>Date sent:</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> March 2015

### Subject: Inquiry into value for money of Motorway and Trunk Road Investment

Dear Public Accounts Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity for the Welsh police forces to provide you with a response on your inquiry into the value for money of Motorway and Trunk Road Investment.

We have restricted our response to the areas that directly relate to police involvement with the Trunk Roads and therefore have focused on the penultimate paragraph of your letter.

#### Managing road traffic accidents

A recent review of the working practices of SWTRA/ NMWTRA route stewards who attend scenes of fatalities or serious injury on the strategic road network has been carried out. Instruction has gone out to the four Welsh police forces for early discussion between the police at scene and route stewards, so that damage to the road surface and/or associated road furniture can be assessed at an early stage, allowing the stewards to make the necessary arrangements and not further delay the opening of the road.

For any major incident/ collision on the M4/A55 the respective police forces for that area will send a police liaison to the relevant traffic management centre so that the incident can be managed effectively, an example being the recent bus crash on the M4 at junction 33.

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### Closure times

On assessing data held by SWTRA, it shows the following:

- a) 2011 – 11 confirmed Fatal RTC's.  
Approximate average length of road closure 5.36 hours
- b) 2012 – 13 confirmed Fatal RTC's.  
Approximate average length of road closure 6.85 hours
- c) 2013 – 21 confirmed Fatal RTC's.  
Approximate average length of road closure 6.47 hours
- d) 2014 - 19 confirmed Fatal RTC's.  
Approximate average length of road closure 6.66 hours
- e) 2015 to date – 3 confirmed Fatal RTC's.  
Approximate average length of road closure 6.1 hours

Therefore based on this rough data the average closure times on our network in the last few years is approximately 6.25 hours. It is anticipated that with the greater use of the 3D Laser Scanners on the road network we will hopefully see a reduction in the average closure times.

We are conscious of the need to balance the economic cost of, and the disruption caused by, road closures as a result of serious or fatal road traffic collisions; with the necessary duty to investigate such matters on behalf of victims, the court or the coroner.

### Co-ordination of the response with highway authorities and other emergency services

It is agreed best practice across Wales that when investigating a fatal or a serious life changing collision, and the assistance of a collision investigator/ crime scene examiner is required, the road is closed. This is to protect the scene and maintain its integrity, and to allow for evidence to be gathered from the scene. There is then the vehicle recovery element and finally the repair/ assessment by a route engineer, before it is deemed safe to re open. This will vary greatly, depending on any number of factors, however the police work closely with highways authorities to set up effective diversionary routes, and other emergency services to ensure disruption is kept to a minimum.

### Use of screens

The route manager of SWTRA has been in liaison with the Highways agency and they are expecting delivery of a set of screens in April, these come on a trailer and consist of 30 screens, when placed end to end, cover a length of 75m. They will be stored at a service providers depot in Malpas, Gwent and will service the M4 from the toll gates to Junction 35. They will be on a 12 month trial, if successful, then a further roll out will be suggested to cover M4 west and A55. In 2012 they were priced at 22k, it is hoped that the trial will show a reduction/ prevention of secondary incidents caused by passing motorists concentrating more on the incident as opposed to what is in front of them.



We would like to make note that the 'Police Authorities' mentioned in your letter have been replaced by Police and Crime Commissioners.

We thank you again for the opportunity to contribute to the Public Accounts Committee inquiry into the value for money of Motorway and Trunk Road Investment, and hope this response will be useful to you.

Yours Sincerely  
Alun Thomas  
Chief Superintendent