

# Scottish Government submission of 23 December 2022

## PE1992/A: Dual the A9 and improve road safety

Thank you for your email dated 30 November 2022 regarding the above named petition which we have considered and responded to below.

Road safety is of paramount importance to the Scottish Government. One life lost on Scotland's roads is one too many.

We remain committed to improving the transport infrastructure throughout Scotland to bring improved road safety and economic benefits to road users and local communities of Scotland alike. With our partners, including local authorities and Police Scotland, we will continue to examine what more can be done to make our roads safer for everyone, and to ensure that more people drive their vehicles safely.

Transport Scotland has developed short-term road safety measures that can be implemented prior to dualling, which take account of the recent unfortunate trend of fatal accidents on the A9 this year. As well as the three safety schemes totalling £95,000 which are already scheduled for delivery, including one at the B9150 (Ralia) junction, an additional £622,000 of works and campaigns will also be delivered by 1 April 2023. Initial engineering works will be concentrated around the Birnam to Dalguise area, as that part of the route has both witnessed some of the recent accidents and allows investment to be concentrated on the first single carriageway section A9 users encounter as they head north. For 2023/24 and 2024/25, the scope of these works will be expanded to the route between Perth and Inverness.

These short term measures will include enhanced road markings with acoustic properties, illuminated road studs plus signage and marking improvements to highlight single carriageways and the transitions at dualled sections. Variable message signs will also be deployed along this part of the route. A fatigue awareness campaign will be run this year, followed by a campaign at Easter and into next summer in support of the "Drive on the Left" work being undertaken across the route.

Transport Scotland also working with the car hire sector and key local and regional partners to examine how tourists and foreign drivers can be better supported in driving safely. This will aid wider campaign work on

“Drive on the Left” and will also highlight the necessity for taking regular breaks, tackling driver fatigue.

The Scottish Government remains firmly committed to completing the dualling of the A9 between Perth and Inverness and we are working hard to bring the benefits of the A9 Dualling programme to Scotland.

In regards to the current status of the programme, I can confirm that road users are already benefiting from the dualled sections between Kincaig and Dalraddy and Luncarty and the Pass of Birnam, which opened in September 2017 and August 2021 respectively.

We are currently progressing the procurement for the Tomatin to Moy section and undertaking design work on the rest of the programme, with ministerial decisions to complete the statutory process confirmed for seven of the remaining eight schemes.

The only section not to have started the statutory process is the Pass of Birnam to Tay Crossing project following the innovative co-creative process with the local community. Work is progressing on announcing a preferred route for this section in the coming months.

As work to determine the most suitable procurement options for the remaining sections of the A9 dualling is ongoing we are currently unable to provide a revised timetable. This is a complex exercise which looks at a number of factors including how the project can be delivered most efficiently by the industry, whilst minimising disruption to road users and helping to support economic recovery post-COVID.

With regard to creating memorials, we understand why people would want to remember loved ones lost in such tragic circumstances. However, there is a risk to people’s safety particularly for anyone who might visit or tend such a memorial and for those reasons, establishing these at roadsides is not encouraged. Families and friends of those bereaved by road deaths may wish to remember those that are important to them in different ways.

Transport Scotland will continue to work with organisations such as the road safety charity, BRAKE, to provide support to everyone who has been affected by the death of someone they knew on Scottish trunk roads.

We hope you find the above information helpful.