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The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Transport Committee

The HGV Speed Limit (Variation) (Scotland) Regulations 2026 [draft]



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Transport Committee

To consider and report on matters relating to transport within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Transport


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Introduction

1. This report concerns the draft HGV Speed Limit (Variation) (Scotland) Regulations 2026, laid before the Parliament by the Scottish Government on 30 September 2026. The instrument, which was laid in draft, is subject to the affirmative procedure – which means it cannot be made unless it has been approved by a resolution of the Parliament.

2. It is for the Transport Committee, as lead committee, to decide whether or not to recommend approval.

About the instrument

3. The Regulations increase the speed limits for heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) over 7.5 tonnes on single and dual carriageway roads (i.e. roads other than motorways). They are made in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 86(2) and (3) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

4. The Regulations increase the maximum speed for HGVs from 40 mph to 50 mph on single carriageways, and from 50 mph to 60 mph on dual carriageways. They also revoke earlier provisions that applied to certain sections of the A9, as the new limits will apply nationally. The changes follow Transport Scotland's National Speed Management Review and a public consultation carried out in 2024-25.

5. The new speed limits are expected to come into force on 1 April 2027 and are not expected to impose significant costs or new requirements on businesses.

Consideration by the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee

6. The Delegated Powers and Law Reform (DPLR) Committee is required to consider every instrument laid before the Parliament and decide whether to draw it to the attention of the Parliament on any of the “reporting grounds” set out in Rule 10.3 of the Parliament's standing orders.

7. The DPLR Committee considered the instrument on 6 October and reported on it in its 10th Report, 2026 and agreed that it did not need to be drawn to the Parliament's attention on any of the reporting grounds.

Consideration by the Transport Committee

8. The Committee took evidence on the instrument from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Transport on 18 November 2026.

9. The Committee noted that the regulations bring HGV speed limits into line with those in other parts of the UK, and asked why Scotland had previously taken a

different approach. The Cabinet Secretary said the Scottish Government had chosen a different approach previously, but that views on speed management had evolved and that the National Speed Management Review and consultation had provided a clear evidence base for change. He added that the new limit is intended to improve road safety and support better traffic flow.

10. Members queried why it had taken so long to align Scotland's approach with the rest of the UK. Officials explained that the Scottish Government had initially awaited the Department for Transport's (DfT) evaluation of speed limits in England, while also undertaking its own National Speed Management Review and A9 trial. They noted that, once the reviews had concluded, ministers took a decision on HGV speed limits.

11. Members discussed whether HGV speed limiters could prevent vehicles from reaching the new limits, potentially frustrating other drivers. Officials responded that this issue would mainly arise on dual carriageways, where overtaking opportunities are available and, therefore, should not create significant problems for traffic flow.

12. Following the oral evidence, the Cabinet Secretary moved motion S7M-01560—

That the Transport Committee recommends that the HGV Speed Limit (Variation) (Scotland) Regulations 2026 [draft] be approved.

13. The Motion was agreed to.

14. **Accordingly, the Committee recommends to the Parliament that the draft HGV Speed Limit (Variation) (Scotland) Regulations 2026 be approved.**

