



MARKING OUT A SAFER FUTURE

THE RSMA RESPONSE TO THE GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION
ON THE POST 2010 ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY - A SAFER WAY



Submission drawn up by:
ROAD SAFETY MARKINGS ASSOCIATION
Safer Future Working Group
July 2009



ROAD SAFETY MARKINGS ASSOCIATION

The Road Safety Markings Association (RSMA) is the largest specialist trade association in the Highways sector, representing companies that supply and install in excess of 90% of the road markings in the UK. The Association has been active in promoting infrastructure road safety for over 30 years through the development and implementation of higher standards and specifications for road marking activities, materials and specifications. RSMA is a member of RUA, PACTS, BRAKE, ERF/IRF and is a signatory European Road Safety Charter.

MARKING OUT A SAFER FUTURE WORKING PARTY

This response to the Government Consultation 'A Safer Way' has been drawn up by an RSMA Working Group, established to look specifically at the issues raised by the Consultation Document and comprising experienced industry practitioners, representing both manufacturing and contracting elements of the sector.

QUALITY, SERVICE & SAFETY

RSMA member companies are committed to quality, service and safety in the installation of road markings on UK highways and are required by a condition of membership to be qualified to National Highways Sector Scheme by March 2010; which in turn requires a fully trained operative workforce to NVQ Level 2 along with CSCS accreditation. The Association itself is currently working with members and the Health & Safety Executive to develop a Best Practice Health & Safety Guide in order to enhance road worker safety throughout the sector.

**ROAD SAFETY MARKINGS ASSOCIATION
UNIT 35 CORRINGHAM ROAD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE
GAINSBOROUGH
LINCOLNSHIRE
DN21 1QB**

www.rsma.co.uk

Telephone: 01427 610101

Fax: 01427 610106

Marking Out a Safer Future - The RSMA response to the Government Consultation on the post 2010 Road Safety Strategy - A Safer Way



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In welcoming the Government's consultation on the UK's post 2010 road safety strategy the Road Safety Markings Association (RSMA), the largest specialist trade association in the Highways sector, has compiled a series of recommendations that it believes will, if implemented, produce significant enhancement to the safety of the UK road network and consequently lead to substantial reductions in the numbers killed and seriously injured on UK roads each year.

The RSMA recommendations are based around the installation of a better performing, durable road safety infrastructure that has a proven road safety record and that can be further enhanced at relatively low cost.

Furthermore the RSMA belief that a better specified road marking infrastructure can immediately and substantially work to reduce road accidents is supported both by leading independent experts in the field of road safety and academic research, which should in itself commend the proposed actions to Government policy makers and specifiers alike. Too often in the public policy arena are simple solutions overlooked in favour of technological or complex proposals – it is vital that developing the correct strategy for saving lives on UK roads does not fall into this trap.

In a time of economic constraint and environmental concern, the RSMA is also confident that its proposals to enhance road safety in the UK, meet the challenges of affordability and sustainability, with low cost solutions that also facilitate a reduction in power use without compromising the safety of road users.

The RSMA submission to Government, '**Marking Out a Safer Future**', proposes a range of actions that RSMA believes will allow for specifiers at all levels to take immediate action; the proposals challenge some of the assumptions and assertions made in the Government Consultation Document '*A Safer Way*', whilst agreeing with others; they are based on our technical expertise presented in a straightforward and clear manner.

RSMA RECOMENDATIONS

Enhanced Road Marking Performance through improved specifications

The RSMA recommends that in order to unlock the full road safety potential of road markings for centre and edgeline markings, the Department of Transport should require specifiers to stipulate a minimum performance requirement of 150mcd for retro-reflectivity and 55SRT skid resistance on all unlit or dimmed roads and all high speed roads, throughout the UK.

Reduced CO2 emissions from the operation of the highway network

RSMA also supports the use of enhanced performance road marking materials as a mechanism to aid highways authorities in attaining CO2 reductions from the use of lighting, facilitating the dimming or extinguishing of lighting, without compromising road safety.

Improved use of wet night visibility products across the network

RSMA recommends that the Department for Transport produces formal guidance for all highways authorities into the use of high performance wet night road marking materials and that it researches further the use of such markings in Spain, with a view to identifying how such materials could positively contribute to the KSI accident reduction targets set in '*A Safer Way*'.



Formalisation of road marking maintenance requirements for all highway authorities

The RSMA believes that the use of well maintained centre and edgelines have clearly been evidenced to reduce accidents on UK roads in general, and rural roads in particular, and that the Government should establish a formal performance and maintenance requirement for such markings for all highway authorities through extension and enforcement of its current maintenance standard TD26/07.

Adoption of wider road markings in line with independent research findings

The RSMA believes that centre and edgeline markings on unlit rural roads are essential to the safety of our highway infrastructure and that the optimisation of their safety role can be achieved by following the findings of the COST 331 research project and implementing a 150mm wide requirement for such lines as part of the strategy to reduce the KSI level on these roads.

Wider lines offer enhanced guidance and lane discipline, especially in adverse weather conditions and combined with the enhanced level of road marking performance recommended by RSMA would have a dramatic impact on reducing accidents, especially on rural roads.

Revision of regulations and specifications relating to the spacing of road studs

The RSMA recommend that a review is conducted into Regulations and Specifications governing the spacing of road studs, in particular circumstances on our highways network, in order to identify whether a reduction in spacing could enhance their role in guiding and alerting drivers through/to hazards and thereby help to reduce accidents.

Require highway authorities to report on annual road safety plans and ring fence budgets

Against the backdrop of uncertainties in public capital and revenue funding and in order to protect road maintenance budgets that directly impact upon road safety infrastructure, the RSMA believes that Government should require all highways authorities to report annually to the proposed Road Safety Delivery Board, on their maintenance and safety budgets, and furthermore that Government should move to ring fence such budgets.

Full supporting data relating to the 'Marking Out a Safer Future' recommendations and in respect to surveys and research cited in the attached submission are available from the RSMA at the address below.

**George Lee
National Director
Road Safety Markings Association**

**ROAD SAFETY MARKINGS ASSOCIATION
UNIT 35 CORRINGHAM ROAD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE
GAINSBOROUGH
LINCOLNSHIRE
DN21 1QB**

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THE ROAD SAFETY MARKINGS ASSOCIATION

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MARKING OUT A SAFER FUTURE WORKING PARTY

This response to the Government Consultation 'A Safer Way' has been drawn up by an RSMA Working Group established to look specifically at the issues raised by the Consultation Document and comprising experienced industry practitioners, representing both manufacturing and contracting elements of the sector.

THE GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH – THE RSMA'S VIEW

The RSMA welcomes the 'A Safer Way' publication and the thrust of its proposals to continue to drive down the level of 'Killed and Seriously Injury' (KSI) accidents on the UK road network and furthermore supports the aims of the strategy to see continued and continuous improvement in the safety of the UK road network. We agree with the challenges identified in the consultation paper and support the need to address each of these challenges if any future safety strategy is to succeed and UK roads are once again to be the safest in Europe. In responding to the consultation we have tried to identify where we believe an enhanced use of road markings may facilitate addressing these challenges.

We welcome the establishment of an independent expert panel to advise on road safety trends and believe that such a panel, if correctly constituted and appropriately empowered, will help to keep a clear policy focus on driving down the number of KSIs on UK roads and help the move towards '*Making Britain's roads the safest in the world*'.

TOWARDS A SAFER ROAD NETWORK

The RSMA believes that a safer future on our highways will be accomplished by a coherent set of initiatives that balance better driver education and behaviours with infrastructure improvements that provide clearer guidance and information to drivers and a more forgiving road environment where mistakes do not automatically carry a death sentence.

To achieve the vision established in 'A Safer Way' RSMA supports the following actions:

- Driving test practical and written elements need to be strengthened to specifically ensure that drivers understand the messages given by horizontal and vertical road signage and can better evaluate the road environment and circumstances they may find themselves in. Consideration should be given to requiring all new drivers to also experience driving simulation exercises that mimic the consequences of speeding in urban and rural roads; helping them recognise the lack of control they can have at speed.
- Increased adoption of passive safety measures such as better designed crash barriers and lighting columns where such items are necessary. We support the use of technological improvements such as



interactive speed signage, however would caution that technology cannot and should not be seen as a panacea, as frequently cost considerations result in reduced returns than those achieved through the co-ordinated use of existing products and technologies.

- Exploitation of improved products such as road markings, where better profiled, higher performing materials can address many of the circumstances identified in 'A Safer Way' as being a priority for accident reduction (see below). The remainder of this submission is dedicated to where RSMA believe greater utilisation of enhanced road marking products will facilitate improved safety on our highway network, whilst unleashing the potential for a substantial reduction in the CO2 emissions related to the operation of our highways network.

MARKING OUT A SAFER FUTURE

It should not come as any great surprise that the industry body for the road marking sector is recommending better and more effective use of road markings, as a mechanism for achieving a reduction in the number of deaths and serious injuries on our roads and the overall achievement of accident reduction targets.

However, it is not just our opinion and professional expertise that convinces us of the accuracy of our proposals, but also the assertions of respected independent professional people and organisations, who maintain the importance of road markings in reducing current accident levels on UK roads. In the month leading up to the writing of this submission alone, the following commentaries have been published.

"Improved roads are those where there has been a significant reduction in the number of fatal and serious collisions over time. Only 2% of the roads analysed this year qualified.

The top ten are shown in Table 1. On these alone, the number of fatal and serious collisions has almost halved from 603 to 288, a total saving of over 300 in the last 3 years. Eight of the ten listed are primary A roads.

Consultation with road authorities on those road sections listed show that the majority have been subject to basic measures such as improvements to existing signing, lining and markings. Seven of the 10 road sections have also resurfaced parts of the route, implementing high-friction anti-skid surfacing particularly on bends and at junctions. Changes to the way in which junctions are designed and laid out have also played a role"

Source: www.eurorap.org/library/pdfs/20090620_RSFIImprovedList.pdf (Emphasis added by RSMA)

"More than half of Britain's A roads have failed to be rated as safe in a study of 28,000 roads and motorways.

*A quarter of motorways also rated poorly, the European road assessment programme (**EuroRAP**) found.*

Single carriageway A roads were rated to be the most dangerous, with experts calling for better signs, lines, junctions and road surfaces"

Source: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/8117911.stm>

*Spokesman for the **Institute of Advanced Motorists** Peter Rodger told the BBC News website there were lots of things that could be done to improve safety through good design.*

"If you've got a reasonably wide single lane road with a junction, you can paint a section in the middle solely for people who want to turn right," he said.

"That way they're removed from the main flow of traffic".

Source: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/8117911.stm>



The RSMA believes that the full road safety potential of road markings has not been fully exploited, by road managers at all levels, and that advances in road marking performance provide substantial potential for even greater improvements in road safety than the impressive returns already attained from the use of road marking systems.

In addition the need for broader use of road marking advances we believe that to an extent some of the lessons learnt many years ago regarding the positive impact of markings systems such as rural edgelines have been 'forgotten' as budgets have come under pressure and experienced staff have been shed by specifying organisations.

Furthermore there is evidence that extended maintenance cycles, seeking short term financial savings, often of relatively low value (when compared with the cost of a KSI accident), further under value the safety impact of well marked roads. The seductive nature of new technology also encourages specifiers to often abandon proven low tech solutions for the glitz of more expensive 'state of the art' approaches, often of questionable sustainable value.

Road markings have a proactive role to play in meeting the priorities of the post 2010 strategy and address a clear number of the priorities areas identified by the Department for Transport within its consultation document.

Road markings can be used to control and influence driver speed, direct and divert traffic movements, contain drivers and alert them to hazard or even heighten hazard perception – these uses address the priorities identified in 'A Safer Way' – slower traffic, reduced traffic run offs and junction conflicts and accidents.

1. Existing evidence of the road safety role of road markings

Evidence to support the extensive use of road markings as a fundamental road safety mechanism have been published over the years and similarly cost benefit analysis exercises have shown the relative value of these projects. (Fuller details of the research referred to in this section is contained in Appendix A of this submission)

Data published by ROSPA and drawn from the Molasses Database show substantial rates of return with road marking schemes at 957% (first year rate of return) and marking and signing schemes at 820% (first year rate of return). Interestingly these rates of return are substantially higher than the figures quoted in 'A Safer Way' for Highways Agency roads [drawn from the HA/Atkins Making Better Use research published in 2006], reflecting perhaps the higher costs involved in maintaining those roads against those using more traditional procurement methods and the lower level of accidents generally witnessed on the Highways Agency network against that on 'de-trunked' roads and rural roads generally.

The ROSPA data identified above is also supported by additional research from local authorities throughout the country, examples of which are detailed below:

2007 Cheshire County Council

The research referred to the application of a high performance road marking material to the A556 in Cheshire, a road carrying some 23,000 vehicles per day. The analysis is based on a wet night performance material applied in 2003 on a section of highway which had in the period 2000 to 2003 suffered 16 recorded personal injury accidents (14 slight & 2 serious, 4 of which occurred in wet-dark conditions). In financial terms the accident profile of this stretch of road is costed prior to treatment, using standard methodology, at £1.4m to the UK economy.

Figure 1, Source: Cheshire County Council 2007



| Status | Total Accidents | Serious Accidents | Slight Accidents | Wet – Dark Accidents |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Before treatment | 16 | 2 | 14 | 4 |
| After treatment | 6 | 0 | 6 | 0 |

Cheshire County Council prioritise safety schemes on the basis of a minimum return to investment of 200%, the scheme as outlined above achieved a first year rate of return of 550%

The outcome of this scheme indicates the significant savings to the UK economy of a relatively modest investment in enhanced road safety using road markings. In this case the cost of the new markings was £20,000.

2006 Durham County Council - Junction Improvement Projects

Durham County Council, having undertaken extensive improvement work to junction layouts throughout the county and has compiled data that identifies range of road safety improvement as a result of using improved and enhanced road marking to improve layouts, these improvements include: -

- A 50% reduction in accidents, associated with improved marking layouts.
- A reduction of speed in the 85th percentile
- Reduction in vehicles breaking the speed limit
- An average first year rate of return 1,868%

Older evidence in relation to the use of edgelines provided support for the widespread introduction of such marking layouts in the 1980's and early 1990's, evidencing as they did the dramatic decline in accidents, especially on unlit rural routes, through the provision of clear edge definition for drivers.

East Sussex

Figure 2: Source RSMA 1989

| | Test Roads | | | Control Roads | | | Net Accident Reduction |
|------------------------|------------|-------|---------|---------------|-------|---------|------------------------|
| | Before | After | %Change | Before | After | %Change | % Change |
| Total Accidents | 68 | 53 | -22% | 80 | 77 | -4% | -18% |
| Daylight | 41 | 36 | -12% | 70 | 78 | +10% | |
| Darkness | 27 | 17 | -37% | 31 | 33 | +6% | -43% |

South Yorkshire

Figure 3: Source RSMA 1989

| | Test Roads | | | Control Roads | | | Net Accident Reduction |
|------------------------|------------|-------|---------|---------------|-------|---------|------------------------|
| | Before | After | %Change | Before | After | %Change | % Change |
| Total Accidents | 30 | 26 | -13% | 105 | 123 | +17% | -30% |
| Daylight | 14 | 16 | +14% | 70 | 78 | +11% | |
| Darkness | 16 | 10 | -38% | 35 | 45 | +29% | -68% |

2. Exploiting the full potential of higher performing road markings to save lives on UK roads

The vast majority of the evidence that demonstrates the significant impact of road markings in reducing accidents is based on 'standard' performing materials and generally does not factor in the capacity of road markings to perform at a higher level, providing clearer, better defined and more consistent guidance to drivers across our road network.



a. Enhanced Performance for visibility

The advent of performance standards for road marking materials in the year 2000 heralded a change in the way in which the majority of clients specified road marking materials; however, it has only limited impact upon what is actually specified.

Road marking materials are graded for performance in areas that are crucial to driver and road user safety, with measurement of the following criteria undertaken at product testing and (often) in situ.

Retro-reflectivity: Level of night time reflection of light from a car headlight at standard geometry

Luminance: Level of daytime reflection of light from standard sunlit conditions

Skid resistance: Level of skid resistance related to a rubber slide, mimicking a tyre

The introduction of performance standards for road marking materials allows for the levels of performance of road marking materials to be varied (subject to some technical constraints) to suit road circumstances and perhaps more importantly to enhance the safety dynamic of the markings. Furthermore the introduction of these standards has led to the widespread development of materials that provide higher levels of dry and wet night retro reflectivity – providing far greater scope for enhancement than has been taken up by specifiers.

The basic specifiable level under these performance standards is:

- 100 milicandelas/lux/metre sq (**mcd**) for retro-reflectivity and 45 SRT for skid resistance

It is this level that is the most common specified level on the UK road network and condition surveys carried out by the RSMA, since 2001, indicate that national and local specifiers have slowly brought the majority of the UK road network up to this minimum standard (with the exception of some roads which still fail to consistently reach the minimum standard), however, these surveys indicate that specifiers have yet to fully exploit the enhanced performance potential of road marking materials.

An increase in the performance level of road markings also has clear benefits for highways authorities seeking to reduce costs in relation to lighting column usage and the related CO₂ emissions from street lighting. Through specification of higher specification road marking materials highways authorities can either dim or extinguish lighting columns, without compromising road safety.

The RSMA recommends that in order to unlock the full road safety potential of road markings for centre and edgeline markings, the Department for Transport should require specifiers to stipulate a minimum performance requirement of 150mcd for retro-reflectivity and 55SRT skid resistance on all unlit or dimmed roads and all high speed roads, throughout the UK.

RSMA also supports the use of enhanced performance road marking materials as a mechanism to aid highways authorities in attaining CO₂ reductions from the use of lighting, facilitating the dimming or extinguishing of lighting, without compromising road safety.

The advent of performance standards has also facilitated the capacity for enhanced wet night products to be specified for use in areas where wet roads cause additional night time hazard to drivers. The use of such materials has become more extensive on the UK network and in part has been responsible for the general up turn in road marking performance since 2003; however, no formal criteria currently exist to guide specifiers in the use of wet



night road marking materials. RSMA believe that such formal guidance should be produced to ensure that road users fully obtain the potential benefits in accident reduction terms offered by these materials, especially where junction conflicts or carriageway run offs are recorded.

In Spain, from January 2009, the national Government has required that all national routes are marked using high performance wet night road marking products, in order to enhance road safety and reduce accidents; this initiative is one which the RSMA supports and believes that the Department for Transport should research this initiative in order to identify the benefits of utilising high performance road marking products in this way.

RSMA recommends that the Department for Transport produces formal guidance for all highways authorities into the use of high performance wet night road marking materials and that it researches further the use of such markings in Spain, with a view to identifying how such materials could positively contribute to the KSI accident reduction targets set in a 'A Safer Way'.

b. Location and maintenance of markings leading to enhanced safety

The data outlined above demonstrating the value of road markings in reducing accidents, particularly in relation to the use of edgelines, is an area of specific importance for the RSMA. We believe that the lack of maintenance of road markings in general and of edgelines in particular contributes to the dangers on many UK roads. We are concerned that the reductions in accidents that followed the implementation of edgeline road markings on many rural routes have been 'forgotten' by many specifying authorities.

A trip along busy unlit rural routes, in particular, presents its own confirmation that this part of our road infrastructure requires immediate attention and if the Government is to attain the targets set out in a 'A Safer Way' then this part of our infrastructure (well maintained centre and edgelines) requires to be given status within policy as being integral to making and maintaining a safer future on our road network.

In cases, already identified in 2009, some highways authorities in the UK have begun to cut maintenance on edgelines on unlit rural roads as a mechanism of saving revenue funding; the consequences of such actions are likely to be increased accidents and possibly road deaths. The prevalence of such actions are likely to increase as Government (devolved and non devolved) and Local Authority budgets are cut in response to current economic conditions; unless national government takes immediate action such cutbacks will jeopardise any KSI reduction targets set nationally as part of the road safety strategy

The Highways Agency, Scottish Executive, Welsh Assembly Government and Roads Service in Northern Ireland currently require maintenance of markings against the maintenance standard TD26/07, and whilst performance has improved on Highways Agency roads since 2005, we are concerned that this standard may be inconsistently enforced across the whole country. Furthermore TD26/07 has no status in respect to the local authorities that manage maintenance on the largest part of the UK road network and since it is in this area that the higher numbers of accidents (particularly KSIs) occur, the RSMA believes that the Government should take action to establish firm requirements of all highway authorities. At a technical level RSMA also believes that in line with the increase in performance standards outlined in 2a. above, the intervention levels specified in TD 26/07 should rise to 120mcd, on all unlit or dimmed roads and all high speed roads throughout the UK, in order to keep intervention at 80% of required initial performance levels

The RSMA believes that the use of well maintained centre and edgelines have clearly been evidenced to reduce accidents on UK roads in general and rural roads in particular and that the Government should establish a formal performance and maintenance requirement for such markings through extension and enforcement of its current maintenance standard TD26/07.



c. The dimensions of markings and an ageing population

In the post 2010 environment and for the foreseeable future the demographic profile of the UK will be that of an increasingly older population (currently approximately 30% of our driver population are over 50), this in itself brings challenges for any future road safety strategy as the driving population will evidence slower reaction times to visual stimuli and to road conditions in general.

As a consequence of this demographic change there is urgency for road authorities to identify mechanisms whereby the negative impacts in respect to driver behaviours/responses can be ameliorated. Research that in part addresses these problems has already been undertaken.

In the 1990's the UK Government participated in a European Union wide research project commissioned by the Directorate – General Transport and published in 1999. Entitled COST 331, the project had the aim of establishing an up to date scientific method with which to determine optimum road marking designs (which ensure that markings are visible by day and by night, in all weather conditions). This was achieved through investigating and evaluating the visual needs of drivers (of all age groups), the effect and impact of road markings on driver behaviour and the impact of road studs.

In summary the main findings of COST 331 showed that:-

- Positioning of the vehicle on the road improved with the better quality of the markings
- Reaction time varied with the quality and width of markings
- A maximum reaction time of 1.8 – 2.0 seconds was considered as safe for the motorist
- 100mcd. is the absolute minimum retro reflectivity required to achieve the required less than 2.0-second reaction time. This is currently the base specification for road markings in the UK (see 2a. Above)

As a result of this research there has been a partial introduction of 150mm wide road markings on to the UK high speed network, however, RSMA believes that an extension of this practice, particularly on unlit rural roads (edgelines and centre lines) would provide significant impetus to the reduction of KSI accidents on that particular part of the network. This belief is supported by supplementary research, undertaken in Germany, following the publication of COST 331 showing that only 50% of the width of the line is focused on by the eye, and therefore that wider lines offer enhanced guidance and lane discipline, especially in adverse weather conditions; thereby enhancing the safety value of the line.

The RSMA believes that centre and edgeline markings on unlit rural roads are essential to the safety of our highway infrastructure and that the optimisation of their safety role can be achieved by following the findings of the COST 331 research project and implementing a 150mm wide requirement for such lines as part of the strategy to reduce the KSI level on these roads.

Wider lines offer enhanced guidance and lane discipline, especially in adverse weather conditions and combined with the enhanced level of road marking performance recommended by RSMA would have a dramatic impact on reducing accidents, especially on rural roads.

d. The use of road studs on UK roads

The relatively strong performance of the UK in accident reduction and in absolute terms in the level of accidents on the UK road network is supported by a range of road safety measures, of which we believe road markings play a major part. The role of road markings, in the UK, is supported by the extensive use of road studs, both inset and surface mounted; and the evidence cited above (COST 331) in relation to road markings also reinforces the importance of road studs in improving driver visibility and assisting reaction times to potential hazards.



In the course of researching our response to 'A Safer Way', the RSMA has identified elements of the regulations/specifications for the use of road studs, in respect to their spacing, which we believe could be amended to enhance, still further, their contribution to road safety. These areas are specifically the following:

- Road studs around chevrons on a motorway are spaced at 3m centres but at ghost islands and turn pockets are at the line/gap spacing i.e. 9m or 6m. RSMA believe that a reduction in spacing to 3m or even 2m this would better highlight the hatched area.
- On the approach to Junctions or sharp bends the red edge line studs (if any) would normally be at 18m centres. RSMA believe that road studs could be used as a countdown to the hazard say 90m @9m centres 60m @6m centres and the last 30m @3m centres The studs could then be continued around the bend at a spacing of 1 - 3 m depending on the severity of the bend.
- On double line systems the recommendation for new installations is 4.5m centres. The existing regulations allow for a spacing of 3m to 4.5m perhaps a spacing of 3m should be recommended on sharp bends

The RSMA recommend that a review is conducted into Regulations and Specifications governing the spacing of road studs, in particular circumstances, on our highways network in order to identify whether a reduction in spacing could enhance their role in guiding and alerting drivers through/to hazards and thereby help to reduce accidents.

e. Road Safety in a time of economic constraint

The vision outlined in 'A Safer Way', of 'Making Britain's roads the safest in the world' is both laudable and demanding. The RSMA is fully supportive of the vision and desire to fulfill it; however, the economic backdrop to the vision could hardly be more challenging, with highway authorities likely to come under severe financial strain over the next three to five years.

The financial restrictions likely to be in place in fact not only jeopardize the attainment of the vision for the future but also the achievements to date, in terms of safer infrastructure and more forgiving roads. This scenario is playing out against a backdrop where elements of our highways network are already poorly maintained and underperforming in terms of safety, as so ably identified by Dr Joanne Hill, Director of the Road Safety Foundation:

"Despite significant advances in knowledge, engineering practice and road-safety countermeasures, 60 per cent of the A-road sections do not achieve even the top two safest risk bands that we would expect as the minimum safety level for these strategic roads; and a quarter of the motorway sections fall outside the safest risk band"

Source: <http://www.roadsafetyfoundation.com/>

These circumstances require both courage from Government and a radical reappraisal of how resources are secured and allocated. The fact that low cost safety measures can have such a disproportionately positive impact upon safety on our network mean that there is a need for Government to move quickly to ensure the security of such funds, and to direct the use of funding to those measures that have immediate and sustained road safety impact.

A mechanism to achieve this could be through a requirement for all highways authorities to report annually to the proposed Road Safety Delivery Board on their maintenance and safety budgets and how these areas are integrated to optimise the performance of basic networks such as markings and signage.



Using historical data it will then be possible to identify what level of investment needs to be ring fenced and whether there is a need to increase investment within specific highway authority areas to underwrite the attainment of the 2020 targets.

Without this level of compulsion the RSMA believes that basic road maintenance budgets and on going road safety priorities will be sacrificed to support other public services, that may come under budgetary pressures over the next five years. The fact that the current level of KSI and other accidents on the UK road network cost the UK economy 1% of GDP per annum means that even without factoring in the distress and misery caused by these accidents, leaving budgetary structures and decision making as it currently stands cannot be an option.

Against the backdrop of uncertainties in public capital and revenue funding and in order to protect road maintenance budgets that directly impact upon road safety infrastructure, the RSMA believes that Government should require all highways authorities to report annually to the proposed Road Safety Delivery Board, on their maintenance and safety budgets, and furthermore that Government should move to ring fence such budgets.



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