

Task 108 of the Health & Safety 5 Year Plan includes the Road Worker Safety target of –
“Aim to eliminate the need for road workers to be on foot on a live carriageway”.

The Road Worker Safety Forum (RoWSaF) programme of work has to date achieved the almost total elimination of live carriageway crossings associated with temporary traffic management, compared to the situation in 2010. This has resulted in a substantial improvement in road worker safety. However, a sizeable proportion of residual risk still remains for road workers due to the current requirement and practice of undertaking work in live lanes.

Road workers enter into live lanes on the SRN to carry out temporary traffic management work activities and to maintain the carriageway or highway assets. This live lane working presents a significant and potentially catastrophic risk to road workers as if they are struck by a road user’s vehicle the injury outcome will be life changing, if not fatal. For this reason, RoWSaF’s Road Worker Safety Strategy has the target to *“aim to eliminate the need for road workers to be on foot in a live lane by 2016”.*

Highways England and RoWSaF have been delivering a programme of research that will enable this target to be achieved. The Road Worker Safety Programme includes a number of offside signs removal and IPV-based projects which were programmed to eliminate residual carriageway crossings and significantly impact on the requirement to undertake live lane working. These were planned to complete in sufficient time for Highways England to be able to publish guidance that would significantly reduce (if not eliminate) live lane working by end December 2016.

The current maintenance programme does not offer sufficient suitable closures for trials, causing current RoWSaF trials projects to stall. This has impacted on the delivery schedule for existing and planned trials designed to deliver solutions to reduce or eliminate live lane working, highlighted a risk that planned camera-monitored trials will not be completed in time to enable guidance required to meet the live lane working target to be published by end December 2016.

Recognising this, RoWSaF has worked up a new approach which makes greater use of both previous trial data and monitored roll out (MRO) data to obtain information on impacts upon levels of safety in order to provide evidence which will confirm whether innovative techniques offer safety benefits for road workers and road users. This revised approach was

considered and approved by the RoWSaF Working Group in February 2016 and work to retrofit this approach to existing RoWSaF trials projects has been largely completed.

Highways England's Operations Directorate has approved RoWSaF proposals to conduct an ongoing programme of multi-region, multi-service provider monitored roll outs (MROs) to assess the safety and operational effectiveness of innovative techniques, in place of conventional camera-monitored trials. Over the past 18 months, RoWSaF has increasingly used MRO arrangements to measure safety performance in place of intensely monitored on-road trials. For example, service provider feedback obtained from MRO trials has formed key safety evidence/assurance which has supported extension of the scope of the offside signs removal guidance (IAN150/16).

Based upon a Memorandum of Understanding, formal commitment has been requested from individual service providers to participate in the following MRO based trials at relaxation closures: -

- . Offside Signs Removal at higher traffic flows
- . Nearside Signs Removal
- . Vehicle Mounted High Level (VMS) Signs
- . Conducting Short Term Closures (less than one hour) using an Impact Protection Vehicle upstream of the taper to eliminate lane working.
- . Testing lighting improvements on rear of Impact Protection Vehicles.

Operational experience obtained through supplier MRO feedback will be analysed to establish whether this provides sufficient evidence to support the publication of new Highways England guidance.