

Increased speed limit on controlled motorway makes sense

A New 60 MPH limit on a section of the M42 hard shoulder has been welcomed by the IAM Motoring Trust as a congestion-busting technique that will improve traffic flow.

The Highways Agency is today (18 March 2008) increasing the speed limit in the innovative M42 active management scheme from 50mph to 60mph, following a study that showed there would be no significant reduction in road safety levels.

We have always believed that technology can be used to safely increase speeds on controlled motorways, as well as limit it, to reduce congestion and aid traffic flow, said Neil Greig, Director of the IAM Motoring Trust.

The level of investment in safety systems, CCTV and recovery patrols on the M42 suggests that a 60mph limit can be set which will make sense to drivers.

The last thing we want is drivers losing trust in the system because it lacks the flexibility to deal with all levels of traffic flow. We shall be watching the scheme with interest and looking at the potential to raise limits even higher where it is safe to do so, adds Greig.

The Highways Agency says the increased maximum speed limit will apply to the two and a half mile southbound stretch of the M42 between junctions 4 and 3a. The electronic overhead signs will clearly display the limit in force.

The Active Traffic Management scheme allows motorists to drive on the hard shoulder during peak periods. Hard shoulder running saw average journey times fall by more than a quarter, making journey times more predictable.

Ends

The IAM Motoring Trust www.iamtrust.org.uk is the research and advocacy arm of the IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists).

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