

## Hindhead Tunnel briefing note

A briefing note containing a high-level overview of information pertaining to Hindhead Tunnel has been requested by Highways England, covering the last 15 month period from September 2016 to 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017. Information contained within this briefing note includes details on incident closures, planned maintenance and unplanned technical events. Also included is a summary of the updated Minimum Operating Requirements (MOR) and the number of closures that this update has prevented. A summary of future schemes scheduled to improved resilience. The successes experienced during the most recent unplanned event on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017, and how that is event is being mitigated for the future is also covered in discussion. The updated Traffic Management plans for Thursley are also included within the appendices.

### Incident Closures (within a Tunnel bore)

- Broken down Vehicles – 61 events in total, 56 were completed under a single lane closure and reduced speed limit, with an average clear-up time of 54 minutes. 5 events required a full bore closure to facilitate a sterile environment for recovery, all 5 were in the northbound bore, with an average duration of 7 minutes
- Debris in road - 8 events in total, 4 required a lane closure to remove the debris and on 4 occasions a bore closure was required. The combined average clean-up time was 4 minutes.
- Vehicle Fire – event occurred on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2017. A full closure of both bores was implemented for a duration of 1hr 45 minutes, after this time the south bound bore was fully opened and the northbound lane 2 opened. The north bound bore was fully opened 1hr 22minutes later following recovery.
- Carriageway defects – (Pothole), 1 event in total. The northbound bore was closed for 4 minutes to allow our Asset Incident Watchman (AIW) a sterile environment to patch a very small pothole that started to develop.
- Pedestrian in carriageway – 3 events in total with an average clearance time of 11 minutes.
- Road traffic collision - 5 events in total, 3 required a lane closure. 2 required a full bore closure, with a combined average clearance time of 31 minutes.

### Incident Closures (outside a Tunnel bore)

- Debris in road - 3 events in total (2 northbound and 1 southbound). All 3 required a bore closure with an average clearance time of 9 minutes.
- Vehicle fire – event occurred on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2017. A vehicle caught fire near the entrance to the southbound bore, both Tunnel bores were closed to facilitate fire and rescue access, both bores were closed for 1hr 2 minutes.
- Vehicle fire – event occurred on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2017. A vehicle caught fire at the exit of the southbound bore, both bores were closed to facilitate fire and rescue access, both bores were closed for 44 minutes.
- Road traffic collision - 13 events in total which impacted routine Tunnel operations. 12 events occurred on the northbound carriageway, 1 event occurred on the southbound. To avoid standing traffic within the bore Area 3 'batched' the traffic. With an average clearance time of 1hr 51minutes, the number of batching operations completed during this period of review is not recorded.

### Planned maintenance

Since July 2011, Area 3 have followed a planned maintenance program which repeats every 6 weeks alternating between the two Tunnel bores. The next planned maintenance week is scheduled for 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

On numerous occasions within the lasts 15 months, the carriageway approaching the Tunnel has been closed for re-surfacing, this has been confused with Tunnel closures because customers have been unable to use the road altogether. The Tunnel maintenance teams coordinate other works in order to utilise this available roadspace, however technically the Tunnel remains open and available for use.

## ITEM 10

### Un-planned technical events

There have been 64 unplanned closures due to technical events since September 2016, with an average duration of 1hr 12minutes. 18 events occurred in the northbound bore, 4 of which required lane closures with an average duration of 5 minutes. 5 required a full bore closure with an average time of 6 minutes and 8 occasions required for the Tunnel to be operated at a 40mph reduced speed limit.

42 events occurred in the southbound bore, 28 events required a lane closure with an average duration of 1hr. 14 events required a bore closure, with an average duration of 5 minutes (resources tend to deploy onto the southbound carriageway to repair the majority of issues, hence the difference in number between the 2 bores). 3 events required the implementation of Contraflow, in order to rectify signage faults. On 1 occasion a full closure was installed to rectify signage faults.

### Updated MOR

In May 2017, a review of the Hindhead Tunnel Minimum Operating requirements was completed. The new documentation was re-issued to the service provider on the 1st June 2017. The review utilised our operational experience gained over the past 6 years since the Tunnel opened, including numerous mitigation measures for system issues that have subsequently resulted in an increased lane availability to our customers.

Going forwards, closures are now typically installed during low traffic periods in order to reduce the level of disruption to our customers. The revisions to the MOR also provide Area 3 with further scope to defer works until the next planned maintenance closure; again focusing on disruption to our customer and utilising existing planned closure events already in the calendar.

### Future Schemes

Kier are undertaking a feasibility study to investigate the options available for the configuration of signs in the tunnel the outcome of which will be to reduce the number of closures required to repair sign faults.

In addition, a study is also ongoing to assess the requirements for electronic signage to support the fixed diversion route signage.

### Recent successes

On the 1<sup>st</sup> December a full closure was required to rectify a signage issue. The Traffic Officer Service supported this closure with 2 officers and a vehicle, they directed vehicles away from Thursley village and at the time of composing this briefing note, no complaints have been received by Area 3's customer enquires team.

### Speed enforcement

Information supplied by Surrey Police. Feedback is that as 40mph enforcement only takes place during planned closures and there have only been two closures since enforcement became possible, it is too early to evidence success. What I can report is that 40mph offences are being processed, plus some 70mph offences at police discretion. Queries received by the police from offenders suggests that they are learning the hard way having experienced no enforcement for such a long time, so word will eventually get round and compliance should improve over time.