

The Rt Hon Mark Harper MP  
Secretary of State  
Department for Transport  
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Sent via email to: [POCorrespondence@dft.gov.uk](mailto:POCorrespondence@dft.gov.uk)

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### **Smart motorways**

Dear Secretary of State,

I am writing to congratulate you on your appointment as Secretary of State for Transport, and to introduce you to Community trade union on behalf of our thousands of members who work in the transportation and storage sectors.

Our members include staff at the AA, who run roadside patrols keeping the UK's motorists safe. They are deeply committed to ensuring road safety and have serious concerns about the safety of the UK's smart motorway networks.

There are roughly 400 miles of smart motorway already in action. About 200 miles of these lack a permanent hard shoulder, and 63 miles use it as a live running lane some of the time.

Community believes that the existing safety precautions on smart motorways are not sufficient. If a car breaks down on all-lane running smart motorways, drivers are meant to aim for emergency refuge areas. We know that these schemes can leave cars stranded in fast-moving traffic. Data shows that 38 people were killed on smart motorways between 2014 and 2019, with the number of deaths on motorways without a hard shoulder rising from 5 in 2017 to 15 in 2019.

We welcomed the move last year to pause the roll-out of all-lane running smart motorways for five years whilst their safety is assessed. As you will be aware, this followed a report from the Transport Committee in November 2021 calling for further safety and economic data to be gathered.

I write to you to urge you to go further and make plans to return the hard shoulder to all motorways, removing all all-lane running motorways from the UK network. We believe this is a critical step to ensure safety.

We look forward to working with you as we do what is necessary to ensure that our roads are as safe as possible.

Yours sincerely,



**Tony Dunne**  
National Officer for Logistics  
Community union

**We are Community. The modern union for a changing world.**

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