



Ein cyf/Our ref: ATISN 20288

Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

26 March 2024

Dear ,

### **Request for Information - ATISN 20288**

Thank you for your request for information dated 29 February.

### **Information requested**

Regarding the 50 mph speed limit on the M4 motorway between Port Talbot and Swansea, which has been justified publicly on signs along the motorway with the intention of improving air quality –

1. What scientific evidence is the Welsh Government relying upon that clearly demonstrates a reduction in speed limits to 50 mph is an effective method of improving air quality along the specified section of the M4 motorway?
2. Given that this reduced speed limit frequently causes long traffic jams, which might offset any potential benefits to air quality, what evidence does the Welsh Government have to show that this is not the case for this section of the M4 motorway?
3. How was the decision made to reduce the speed limit to 50 mph on this section of the M4 motorway? Please provide details of the decision-making process, including any alternative factors or motivations behind this decision.
4. How much money is generated on average from speeding fines due to the average speed check enforcement in this section of the M4 motorway and was this a factor in the decision making process?

### **Our Response**

I can confirm that the Welsh Government holds some of the information you have requested.



Llywodraeth Cymru /  
Welsh Government  
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CF10 3NQ

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

1. The evidence base used to derive the potential benefits of reducing the speed limit at this location is based on the following:

[Effectiveness Review](#);

[M4 Port Talbot J41 to J42 WelTAG Stage One Report](#);

[M4 Port Talbot J41 to J42 WelTAG Stage Two Report](#); and

[M4 Port Talbot J41 to J42 WelTAG Stage Three Report](#)

2. We do not hold any data indicating that the reduced speed limit has led to an increase in traffic congestion in this area.
3. Consultants were engaged by Welsh Government to undertake an independent appraisal of measures that had the potential to improve air quality alongside the motorway. Measures were assessed against the following criteria:
  - a) will achieve compliance with the nitrogen dioxide limit as soon as possible;
  - b) will do so in a way that reduces exposure to nitrogen dioxide as quickly as possible; and
  - c) will mean that achieving compliance is not just possible but likely.

Information on the process is available on the Welsh Government website:

- [Consultation](#) on draft air quality plan and initial appraisals of measures
- [Consultation](#) on final air quality plan and appraisals of measures
- [Decision](#) of the Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Transport to continue the 50mph speed limits to achieve compliance with limit values for nitrogen dioxide laid down in the Ambient Air Quality Directive (17 December 2018)

4. We do not hold speed enforcement revenue information. This information is held by GoSafe who can be contacted at [General Enquiries | GoSafe Welsh Road Casualty Reduction Partnership](#).

## Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit, Welsh Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ  
or Email: [Freedomofinformation@gov.wales](mailto:Freedomofinformation@gov.wales). Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

The request you sent me contains personal information about you - for example, your name. The Welsh Government will be the data processor for this information

and, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation, it will be processed in order to fulfil our public task and meet our legal obligations under the Act to provide you with a response. We will only use this personal information to deal with your request and any matters which arise as a result of it. We will keep your personal information and all other information relating to your request for three years from the date on which your request is finally closed. Your personal information will then be disposed of securely.

Under data protection legislation, you have the right:

- to be informed of the personal data we hold about you and to access it
- to require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be 'erased'
- to (in certain circumstances) data portability
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection

For further information about the information which the Welsh Government holds and its use, or if you wish to exercise your rights under the GDPR, please see contact details below:

Data Protection Officer  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
CARDIFF  
CF10 3NQ

Email: [DataProtectionOfficer@gov.wales](mailto:DataProtectionOfficer@gov.wales)

Any information released under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or Environmental Information Regulations 2004 will be listed in the Welsh Government's Disclosure Log (at <https://gov.wales/about/open-government/freedom-of-information/responses/?lang=en>).

Yours sincerely