

# Smart Motorways

**England's motorways are among the most congested in Europe and the government has plans to convert over 10% of the motorway network to SMART (previously known as Managed) Motorways. This offers a cheaper way to increase capacity than motorway widening but will change the way we drive on our safest roads.**

SMART motorway pilot schemes have successfully increased traffic flow on the M42, M1, M25 and M6 by adopting peak time hard shoulder running, CCTV monitoring, speed cameras and gantry mounted lane control signs. For drivers, the most comforting feature about them is knowing that the traffic situation is being constantly watched and a Control Centre can take immediate action in the event of incidents or congestion. The new generation of SMART motorways are different - they involve full time hard shoulder running, bigger gaps between refuges and less frequent roadside electronic signs. Detection and monitoring of incidents is still at a high level and lanes can be signalled as closed and resources dispatched instantly to assist drivers.

## IAM Policy

- The IAM support SMART motorways, studies show most drivers like them and they reduce congestion flow without jeopardising safety
- SMART motorways have been intensively modelled but have yet to fully prove themselves in the real world. The early schemes must be used as a test bed for future implementation
- Most breakdowns and incidents on motorways are avoidable and the IAM will work closely with the Highways Agency to improve driver behaviour on our motorway network
- Intensive education campaigns are needed to explain the new road designs to drivers who often only use motorways on an occasional basis
- Compliance with lane control signals is key to the success of SMART motorways and the IAM support enforcement of Red X signs providing it is done consistently across the network
- The government should continue to have a long term plan to widen the most congested sections of the motorway network
- The IAM's advice for driving on a managed motorway is: keep to the speed limit displayed, obey Red X signs, don't change lanes; if you believe your car is in trouble try to get into an emergency refuge where you will be safe, if you break down in a running lane wait for help in the car.