

Donald MacKintosh

CON539/28

Rebecca Daddow  
Scottish Executive  
Roads policy & Group Finance Division  
2-DD, Victoria Quay  
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Dear Miss Daddow

**Re: Tolled Bridges Review - Phase Two Consultation**

Have attached my comments on above issue.

When copying this response to other parties please keep address  
**confidential**. Thank you.

Yours sincerely

*Donald MacKintosh*

## Observations & Comments on Tolled Bridges Review - Phase Two

Paragraph 13 (page 5) Statement here is untrue. When each bridge was built people were told that the tolls were to recoup the cost of building the bridge, and would then be discontinued. However over the years the argument has been changed to stating the tolls are for the cost of the bridge and ongoing maintenance. This is to enable the government to keep collecting money and continue the tolls indefinitely. In 1974 it was stated that the Forth bridge was on target to be paid of in 20 years. In 1994 a similar statement was made.

Erskine Bridge cost £10.7 in 1971. No cost is given for Forth and Tay bridges, which opened in 1964 and 1966 respectively. The revenue generated in the years since then have paid for the bridges, which should now be toll free.

Exemption for emergency services should be automatic and include all. Denying the Coastguard and Doctors with flashing green lights exemption is illogical. **Delaying emergency services has Health & Safety issues, and invites prosecution against relevant bodies.** Other exemptions for disabled should be handled expeditiously and avoid delaying other traffic. One way would be to scrap the tolls.

Document states Erskine is part of road network, Forth and Tay are not. All three bridges were built to connect roads, and therefore by definition are all part of the road network. To say otherwise is contrived. It also begs the question that if Forth & Tay are not part of road network how can Road Traffic Act apply?

Collecting Tolls is both damaging to the environment, health of people in locality and bridge. Vehicles need to make an unnecessary stop and then regain momentum, this wastes fuel and increases pollutants in atmosphere generating additional costs for NHS. Making one column of traffic on one side of the bridge brake while the column on the other side accelerates causes an unnecessary torsional force on the bridge which increases wear and increases maintenance cost.

Tolls are discriminatory, in charging people say 60pence/mile to drive over part of the road network. If a motorist does not have the toll he is prevented from travelling in one direction which contravenes ECHR Art14. Why is there such a concentration of toll bridges in Scotland as opposed to other parts of the UK.

Some of the suggestions in the document are plainly non-sensical. Paragraph 57 Moving the toll plaza from one end of the bridge to the other would entail demolishing a perfectly good building to build another. Unnecessary expense which would add to cost and life of tolls.

Bridges are clearways. Drivers are liable to a non-endorseable fixed penalty for stopping.

In summary, tolls are unjustified as the cost of bridges have been met a long time ago. Their continuance is merely to raise revenue. Their collections damages health, environment and bridges. Therefore collection may actually cost more than the revenue generated(it's not as if the Government needs the money, it wastes more than is collected in lots of other areas). They force local to pay for using part of the road network at an excessively high cost per mile. They contravene ECHR Art14. The only logical thing to do is to scrap them now.