



ASSOCIATION OF CHIEF POLICE OFFICERS IN SCOTLAND

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Your Ref:

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Date: 30 June 2005

By email

Rebecca Daddow
Scottish Executive
Road Policy and Group Finance Division
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Email: tolledbridgesreview@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Dear Ms Daddow

**SCOTLAND'S TRANSPORT
TOLLED BRIDGES REVIEW - PHASE TWO CONSULTATION**

I refer to your correspondence dated 15 April 2005 in connection with the above subject, which has been considered by members of the Road Policing Business Area and can now offer the following by way of comment.

Exemptions for Emergency Services

Question 1 - The present scheme encourages persons who regularly use the bridge, to apply in advance for exemptions, which reduces delays and appears to work well. With regards to one off travellers, the system of verification does cause delay, but this is required to ensure that Blue Badges are not misused. In the long term, technical advances may assist in improving this area, but in the meantime it would appear appropriate to continue with the current procedure.

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Question 2 – The three emergency services mentioned are the primary services that regularly require to use the bridges. Other key services may require using the bridge, but this would normally be on an occasional basis. If a general exemption is granted this may lead to misuse and it would not necessarily assist in reducing congestion.

Question 3 – As highlighted in response to Question 2, extending exemptions to cover all breakdown services could lead to misuse.

Question 4 – In line with Scottish Executive strategy to reduce congestion, the exemption or discounting of such (multi-occupancy) vehicles may be a worthy consideration.

Discount Schemes

Question 5 – Again, in line with the Scottish Executive strategy to reduce congestion, a move should be made to offer discounts to vehicles, which encourage this, namely buses or multiple occupancy vehicles. By reducing discounted pre paid vouchers for single occupancy vehicles, drivers will be encouraged to ‘group’ for journeys.

Classification of Vehicles

Question 6 – A common vehicle classification will be hard to achieve at present due to variations in the organisation of bridge authorities, however to assist in traffic movement at tolls, the simplest possible charging, with broad vehicle classifications could be adopted.

Reducing Traffic Congestion on Tolled Bridges

Question 7 – Encouraging means to reduce congestion must be at the centre of any review. As previously stated, a discount could be offered to multiple occupancy vehicles rather than merely due to pre-payment.

Question 8 – Due to driver practice and current working patterns, the financial increase would have to be extremely high to discourage use at peak times.

Tolls Reflecting Cost of Wear and Tear

Question 9 – While this would be best practice, as previously highlighted, it is very difficult to classify a variety of vehicles and their actual weight during journey.

Procedure for Changing Tolls or Charges

Question 10 – Continued support from the public is essential, and therefore public liaison should continue.

Question 11 – It is considered that final approval by Scottish Ministers should remain in place.

Question 12 – Inflation linked increases are worthy of consideration.

Executive/Transport Agency

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Question 13 – A central management, covering all three bridges, would possibly reduce administration, costs and assist in working towards a standardisation of tolled bridge operations.

Regional Transport Partnerships (RTP's)

Question 14 – This is a worthy consideration, and would link bridge operations with other regional transport issues.

Question 15 – This is also a worthy consideration, which again would link bridge operations in with other regional transport issues.

Single Tolled Bridges Authority

Question 18 – There would possibly be merit in a single body being responsible and accountable for all bridges. This could lead to better practices and a standardisation of operations. The local aspect should also be considered and linking in with RTP's would be essential.

I trust that the foregoing is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William Roe'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'W'.

Chief Constable
(Hon. Secretary)