

Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS) submission of 6 April 2023

PE1992/D: Dual the A9 and improve road safety

The Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee considered the above petition at its meeting on 22 February 2023 and asked that The Society of Chief Officer for Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS) give our views on the following points;

- 1) publishing a revised timetable and detailed plan for dualling each section;
- 2) completing the dualling work by 2025; and
- 3) creating a memorial to those who have lost their lives in road traffic incidents on the A9.

In response to the first point, the Society would always advise the Local Roads Authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships who make up our membership, that providing up to date plans and timetables for the delivery of major transport infrastructure is best practice. Asking that Scottish Government should do so seems an appropriate and reasonable request and one that can only aid the understanding of the complexities of delivering a project of the scale of dualling the A9. We are aware that the Transport Scotland leads for the A9 Dualling Project have worked closely with the Local Roads Authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships and given the closeness of the relationship, it is felt that this would allow for an updated set of plans and timetables to be put in place in as collaborative manner as possible.

On the second point, I can confirm that as a Society we are not party to the detailed work to bring forward the multiple sections of the A9 that are still due to be dualled. However, based on the scale of the work to be taken forward, completing the dualling of the A9 between Perth and Inverness by 2025 (some 20 months) would not, in our professional view be achievable given the legal, procurement, design, consultation, funding, staffing and programming requirements.

On the third point, our members have worked collaboratively with multiple agencies to reduce the level of death and injury across all roads in Scotland for many decades. We have seen real progress in moving towards a vision of zero fatalities and that is the collective goal for all of us.

Every family who have lost someone in a road collision will keep the memory of their loved one with them forever and in our work with colleagues in emergency services through national working groups, we know that for some people a physical memorial can be a positive thing whilst for others it could trigger negative emotions. Therefore, any proposal for a memorial that focusses on the lives lost whilst using the A9 would have to respect all those people impacted and may also lead to similar requests for other routes to be similarly recognised.