

2024 No. 841

ROAD TRAFFIC, ENGLAND

SPECIAL ROADS, ENGLAND

The M6 Motorway (Junctions 21a to 26) (Variable Speed Limits) Regulations 2024

Made - - - - at 12.50 p.m. on 30th July 2024

Laid before Parliament at 3.00 p.m. on 30th July 2024

Coming into force 21st August 2024

The Secretary of State makes these Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred by section 17(2), (3) and (3ZB) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984(a).

The Secretary of State has consulted representative organisations in accordance with section 134(2) of that Act(b).

Citation, commencement and extent

1. These Regulations may be cited as the M6 Motorway (Junctions 21a to 26) (Variable Speed Limits) Regulations 2024.
2. These Regulations come into force on 21st August 2024.
3. These Regulations extend to England and Wales.

Interpretation

4. In these Regulations—
“the 1982 Regulations” means the Motorways Traffic (England and Wales) Regulations 1982(c); and
“carriageway” has the same meaning as in the 1982 Regulations.

(a) 1984 c. 27. Section 17(2) was amended by paragraph 28(3) of Schedule 8 to the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (c. 22), paragraph 25 of Schedule 4 to the Road Traffic Act 1991 (c. 40) and section 21(3) of the Scotland Act 2012 (c. 11). Section 17(3ZB) was inserted by section 21(4) of the Scotland Act 2012. For the meaning of “use” in section 17(2), see section 17(6). For the meaning of “special road” in section 17(2), see section 142(1) (as amended by paragraph 78(5) of Schedule 8 to the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991), which provides that “special road” in England and Wales has the same meaning as in the Highways Act 1980 (c. 66). “Special road” is defined in section 329(1) of that Act, as amended by paragraph 29(2) of Schedule 2 to the Planning Act 2008 (c. 29).

(b) Section 134(2) was amended by paragraph 12(3) of Schedule 2 to the Scotland Act 2016 (c. 11).

(c) S.I. 1982/1163, amended by S.I. 1983/374, 1984/1479, 1992/1364, 2004/3258 and 2015/392; there are other amending instruments but none is relevant.

Variable speed limits

5.—(1) No person shall drive a vehicle on a section of a road which is subject to a variable speed limit at a speed exceeding that indicated by a speed limit sign.

(2) A section of a road is subject to a variable speed limit in relation to a vehicle being driven on it if—

- (a) the road is specified in the Schedule;
- (b) the vehicle has passed a speed limit sign;
- (c) the vehicle has not subsequently passed—
 - (i) another speed limit sign indicating a different speed limit; or
 - (ii) a traffic sign which indicates that the national speed limit is in force; and
- (d) no speed restriction is in force by virtue of—
 - (i) an order or notice under section 14 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984(a); or
 - (ii) a traffic sign placed by a traffic officer pursuant to section 7 of the Traffic Management Act 2004(b).

(3) In relation to a vehicle, the speed limit indicated by a speed limit sign is the highest of—

- (a) the speed shown at the time the vehicle passes the sign; or
- (b) the speed shown by the sign ten seconds before the vehicle passed the sign (if different).

(4) In relation to a vehicle, a speed limit sign is to be taken as not indicating any speed limit if, ten seconds before the vehicle passed it, the sign showed no speed limit or was a traffic sign which indicates that the national speed limit is in force.

(5) In this regulation—

“the 2016 Regulations and Directions” means the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016(c);

“national speed limit” has the meaning given by Schedule 1 to the 2016 Regulations and Directions;

“a traffic sign which indicates that the national speed limit is in force” in relation to a vehicle means a traffic sign of the type shown in diagram 671 in Part 2 of Schedule 10 to the 2016 Regulations and Directions which is—

- (a) placed on or near a road; and
- (b) directed at traffic on the carriageway on which the vehicle is being driven;

“road” includes the adjacent hard shoulder and verge, as those terms are defined in the 1982 Regulations; and

“speed limit sign” in relation to a vehicle means a traffic sign of the type shown in diagram 670 in Part 2 of Schedule 10 to the 2016 Regulations and Directions which is—

- (a) placed on or near a road; and
- (b) directed at traffic on the carriageway on which the vehicle is being driven.

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State for Transport

Lilian Greenwood
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department for Transport

At 12.50 p.m. on 30th July 2024

(a) Section 14 was substituted by the Road Traffic (Temporary Restrictions) Act 1991 (c. 26), section 1(1) and Schedule 1.
(b) 2004 c. 18.
(c) S.I. 2016/362, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.

SCHEDULE

Regulation 5(2)(a)

THE SPECIFIED ROADS

1. The specified roads are—
 - (a) the length of the northbound carriageway of the M6 beginning at junction 21a from the northern bridge deck edge of the most northern M62 connecting road overbridge and ending at junction 26 at a point 160 metres from the southern edge of the M58 underbridge;
 - (b) the length of the southbound carriageway of the M6 beginning at junction 26 at a point 170 metres from the southern edge of the M58 underbridge and ending at junction 21a at a point 535 metres from the southern edge of the M62 overbridge crossing the mainline M6;
 - (c) the carriageways of the slip roads to and from the M6 referred to in paragraph 3; and
 - (d) the linking carriageways to and from the M6 referred to in paragraph 4.
2. In this Schedule—
 - (a) “linking carriageway” means a carriageway linking one motorway with another which begins at the diverge from one motorway and ends where the carriageway merges with the other motorway whether or not the carriageway has merged with another carriageway before its merger with that other motorway;
 - (b) “motorway” has the same meaning as in the 1982 Regulations; and
 - (c) “slip road” means a road which connects the M6 with another road other than a motorway.
3. The slip roads to which this paragraph refers are—
 - (a) at junction 22, the slip roads connecting to and from the A572;
 - (b) between junctions 22 and 23—
 - (i) the slip roads connecting to and from the road system in the works depot on the northbound carriageway of the M6; and
 - (ii) the slip roads connecting to and from the road system in the works depot on the southbound carriageway of the M6;
 - (c) at junction 23, the slip roads connecting to and from the A580;
 - (d) at junction 24, the slip road connecting from the A58 to the northbound carriageway of the M6 and the slip road connecting from the southbound carriageway of the M6 to the A58; and
 - (e) at junction 25, the slip road connecting from the A49 to the northbound carriageway of the M6 and the slip road connecting from the southbound carriageway of the M6 to the A49.
4. The linking carriageways to which this paragraph refers are—
 - (a) at junction 21a—
 - (i) the linking carriageway from the eastbound carriageway of the M62 to the northbound carriageway of the M6;
 - (ii) the linking carriageway from the westbound carriageway of the M62 to the northbound carriageway of the M6, from a point 35 metres east of the eastern edge of the Mill House Lane overbridge;
 - (iii) the linking carriageway from the southbound carriageway of the M6 to the westbound carriageway of the M62; and
 - (b) at junction 26—
 - (i) the carriageway linking the M6 northbound carriageway to the M58 Orrell Interchange; and

- (ii) the carriageway linking the M58 Orrell Interchange to the M6 southbound carriageway.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations introduce variable speed limits to—

- (a) the north and southbound carriageway of the M6 motorway between junctions 21a and 26; and
- (b) certain roads for joining and leaving the M6 motorway between those junctions.

Regulation 5 provides for variable speed limits to have effect on the roads specified in paragraph 1 of the Schedule. Where variable speed limit signs are in operation, a vehicle may not be driven at a speed above the maximum indicated by each speed limit sign passed by a vehicle until it passes a sign indicating that the national speed limit applies, or the vehicle leaves the roads covered by the regulation. Where a speed limit changes less than ten seconds before a vehicle passes the sign and the sign had indicated a higher speed limit, the regulation allows the driver to proceed at a speed up to the maximum applicable before the change. Where the speed limit sign indicates a speed limit when it is passed by a vehicle but less than ten seconds previously it was either giving no indication of a speed limit or indicated that the national speed limit applied, the sign is to be taken as giving no indication of a speed limit to the vehicle passing it.

Contravention of these Regulations is an offence under section 17(4) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

A full impact assessment has not been produced for these Regulations as no, or no significant, impact on the private, voluntary or public sector is foreseen. An Explanatory Memorandum is published alongside the Regulations at www.legislation.gov.uk.

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