



Improved visibility - the bright orange SOS-signed emergency refuge area on the M3 near Camberley

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RAC comments on Highways England trial of a bright orange emergency refuge area for smart motorways

The RAC welcomes the trial of a new bright orange SOS-signed emergency refuge area by Highways England in a development to improve awareness and understanding of what to do if you breakdown or have an accident on a smart motorway.

RAC road safety spokesman Pete Williams said: "Breaking down on a motorway can be an incredibly frightening experience. This is heightened by

the lack of understanding of what to do on new smart motorway sections due to concerns about where to find safety when there is no hard shoulder or it is operating as a running lane.

“Smart motorways are becoming an increasingly common feature of our motorways across England as they are rolled-out in effort to tackle congestion but there is still a good deal of misunderstanding about what to do in the event of a breakdown or an accident.

“Today’s announcement by Highways England that it is trialling a bright orange SOS-signed emergency refuge area (ERA) is good news as this will significantly improve visibility and make it easier for drivers to find a place of relative safety. The planned development also includes a clear indication of where to stop, additional distance markers between ERAs, and better signage with the internationally recognised SOS acronym to improve understanding of how they should and shouldn’t be used. We hope this will be rapidly adopted across existing and all new smart motorways.

“We remain concerned about the long distances between ERAs on many smart motorways where the hard shoulder has been permanently removed and believe that safety would be further enhanced by additional ERAs to reduce the likelihood of vehicles being stranded in live lanes.”

The press office email address is press.office@rac.co.uk and media centre is at media.rac.co.uk. **Please note:** the press office is unable to help with individual customer enquiries - please visit the [RAC contacts page](#) to find the right contact.

About the RAC

The RAC, an iconic UK brand, provides complete peace of mind to nearly 14 million UK private and business drivers, whatever their motoring needs. As well as its premium nationwide breakdown assistance service – with an expert branded patrol workforce attending more than two million breakdowns every year – it offers a wide range of market-leading products across insurance, legal services, vehicle inspections and service, maintenance

and repair. Included in this is the first-of-its-kind nationwide Mobile Mechanics service which brings the garage to homes and workplaces.

At the forefront of new solutions for business fleets and consumers, the RAC's breakdown service is electric-ready with mobile EV charging technology and can be called on using [myRAC](#) – the all-in-one route planner, fuel finder and breakdown reporting app.

Visit the [RAC website](#).

Contacts



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