

EIR Request (received 23 June 2025) - Reference: DFI/2025-0280

I am submitting this request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please provide the following information:

1. A copy of the Department for Infrastructure's current internal guidance, technical standards, or policy documents relating to:
 - The design, positioning, and visibility of bus lane signage and road markings;
 - Any requirements for advance signage, turn markings, or driver warnings before the start of a bus lane.
 - The standards used to assess compliance of existing signage with legal or departmental expectations.
2. Any instructions, guidance or enforcement protocols issued to staff or contractors (including third-party enforcement agencies) regarding the use of signage and markings when issuing Penalty Charge Notices for bus lane contraventions.
3. Any equality impact assessments, consultation responses, or internal reviews discussing the clarity, fairness, or adequacy of bus lane signage as it relates to enforcement policy.

Response (issued 29 July 2025)

Thank you for your email dated 23 June 2025, requesting information on the bus lane signage and marking standards used by the Department for Infrastructure, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI). You requested for the following information:

1. *A copy of the Department for Infrastructure's current internal guidance, technical standards, or policy documents relating to:*
 - *The design, positioning, and visibility of bus lane signage and road markings;*
 - *Any requirements for advance signage, turn markings, or driver warnings before the start of a bus lane; and*
 - *The standards used to assess compliance of existing signage with legal or departmental expectations.*

2. *Any instructions, guidance or enforcement protocols issued to staff or contractors (including third-party enforcement agencies) regarding the use of signage and markings when issuing Penalty Charge Notices for bus lane contraventions.*
3. *Any equality impact assessments, consultation responses, or internal reviews discussing the clarity, fairness, or adequacy of bus lane signage as it relates to enforcement policy.*

In considering your request on behalf of the Department I have determined that the information requested falls under the aegis of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, as opposed to the FOI Act 2000. Section 39 of the Freedom of Information Act specifically excludes from consideration under that Act requests for what is deemed to be environmental information. EIR gives rights of public access environmental information held by public authorities.

A guide explaining the Environmental Information Regulations can be found at: [Guide to the Environmental Information Regulations](#).

Please accept my apologies for the delayed response which was due to an administrative error. I hope this has not caused you any inconvenience.

In response to your request, I can confirm that the Department for Infrastructure does hold information related to your request. As EIR relates to public rights of access to information, I must consider whether information is suitable for release to the world at large, and not solely to the applicant. I have examined the information you requested and carried out a public interest test to determine whether this information is suitable for release to the public.

In response to your requests above, I have addressed each point below.

1. It is not Departmental Policy to provide copies of internal guidance, technical standards nor policy documents as these are readily available in the public domain. Where available, I have included hyperlinks to relevant guidance and documentation for your convenience.
 - The Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 3 - Regulatory Signs 2019, provides guidance on the design, positioning and visibility of bus lane signage and road markings, available at: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5c78f895e5274a0ebfec719b/traffic-signs-manual-chapter-03.pdf>.
 - As in above. Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 3 - Regulatory Signs 2019, provides guidance on the requirements for advanced signage.

- Upon completion of a scheme to provide new or make amendments to existing bus lanes the Department undertakes a check to ensure design compliance and to assure enforcement protocols can be implemented. Routine maintenance inspections are undertaken periodically to assure continued compliance and ability to enforce. Roads Service Policy and Procedure Guide: RSPPG_E019, Road Maintenance Standards for Safety, available at: [RSPPG E019 Road Maintenance Standards for Safety](#), provides guidance on the frequency of these inspections.
2. Guidance is available to all staff and contractors regarding the use of signage and markings when issuing penalty charge notices for bus lane contraventions. The links below provide guides to bus lanes, including road markings and signs, when bus lanes operate, who can use them, and how they are enforced.
- <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/bus-lanes-and-bus-only-streets> and
 - <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/enforcement-bus-lanes-and-bus-only-streets>
3. The Department has powers under Articles 4, 5 & 7 of the Road Traffic Regulation (NI) Order 1997 to introduce traffic management schemes and RSPPG S002 - Traffic Management Procedures, available at: [RSPPG S002 Traffic Management Procedures](#), provides guidance on the protocols required. This includes the obligation for consideration be given to Equality and the European Convention on Human Rights and sets out the consultative requirements if a Traffic Regulation Order, an Experimental Traffic Control Scheme or a Temporary Traffic Regulation is proposed.

The adequacy of bus lane signage is addressed in point 1 above.

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