

## **EIR Request (received 18 February 2019) - Reference: DFI/2019-0068**

Can I please submit the following Freedom of Information (2000)/Environmental Regulations (2004) request relating to Traffic section within DFI Roads: -

*Where Traffic Section have undertaken measured assessments of the design speed on public roads (i.e. a 7-day automatic traffic count assessment) can you please confirm the following:*

- *The default settings adopted in the Metro-Count Traffic Executive analysis software including the default settling in the software for road tube spacing;*
- *The guidance provided to the personnel installing the traffic count equipment on site. Please confirm the guidance provided relating to the spacing of the road tubes (i.e. what tube spacing should be adopted) and the guidance provided relating to the length of the road tubes;*
- *Please confirm if installations are undertaken in accordance with DMRB Vol. 5 TA 22/81. If not please confirm the standard adopted;*
- *Are the results of the speed surveys corrected for weather conditions prevalent during the survey as per DMRB Vol. 5 TA 22/81; and*
- *Are speed surveys undertaken in accordance with Transport NI/DfI Roads Director of Engineering Memorandum 'DEM 118/16: Design Speed for Roads.*

## **Response (issued 19 March 2019)**

Thank you for your email dated 18 February 2019 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

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 (EIR), as opposed to Freedom of Information Act 2000. Your request is for information that relates to activities, policies or plans that affect the environment. Section 39 of the Freedom of Information Act specifically excludes from consideration under that Act requests for what is deemed to be environmental information.

A guide explaining the Environmental Information Regulations can be found at:

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-environmental-information-regulations/what-are-the-eir/>.

The Environmental Information Regulations established general public rights of access to environmental information held by public authorities, similar to the general rights established under FOI, information provided in response to a request is considered to have been placed in the public domain. There is no provision for privileged access to information, it may either be released to the World at large, or it must be withheld. Any information provided in response to an information request (either FOI or EIR) is considered to have been placed in the public domain.

In response to your request,

- DfI Roads utilise the MetroCount MC5600 vehicle counter system to carry out temporary surveys. The default setting for the tube spacing is 1.0m, pre-set in the factory.

The debounce default of 10ms is generally used as per the MetroCount Roadside Unit Operators Guide, MetroCount 5600 Series, January 2002. However the debounce parameter is site specific and will depend on road conditions and the carriageway lane arrangement. Table 1 describes the debounce value reference that is used.

Table 1: Metrocount Debounce Values

Debounce	Description
10ms	<b>Multiple Lane Default</b> – Use this setting for a tube that spans more than one lane, assuming ideal road quality.
20ms	<b>Multiple Lane Special</b> – Use this setting for a tube that spans more than one lane, where road quality is poor, or there is slow-moving traffic.
30ms	<b>Single Lane Default</b> – Use this setting for a tube that spans one lane only, assuming ideal road quality.
40ms	<b>Single Lane Special</b> – Use this setting for a tube that spans one lane only, where road quality is poor, or there is slow moving traffic.
>50ms	<b>Single Lane Special</b> – Use this setting for a tube that spans one lane only, under exceptional circumstances such as car parks.

- All traffic counter installers are briefed on installing this type of temporary counter and instructed that the tubes be of equal length and placed at 1.0m centres in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- When appropriate to do so, traffic counts utilising this type of installation adhere to the advice given in DMRB Vol. 5 TA22/81 to achieve a representative sample of vehicle count and speed. Where a count relates to a private access/planning application, the requirements and guidance of DCAN 15 are applied.

- Weather conditions and any unusual circumstances are recorded at the time of the survey to ensure that drivers are in no way prevented, by extreme weather, from driving at the speed of their own choice. The survey data is generally collected over a minimum period of 7 days and the speeds presented are average and 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds; speeds are not generally corrected for weather conditions.
- This DfI memorandum is used to select design speeds for the design of both new roads and improvements/amendments to existing ones. The only reference to speed collection is: “The speed survey should be undertaken in accordance with DMRB Vol. 5 TA 22/81. Other less onerous survey methods may be adopted for small schemes subject to the agreement of the Project Owner.”

## Copyright notice

The supply of information under the Freedom of Information Act or the Environmental Information Regulations does not give the recipient or organisation that receives it the automatic right to reuse it in any way that would infringe copyright. Information supplied continues to be protected by copyright. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including for private study and non-commercial research, and for any other purpose authorised by an exception in current copyright law. Documents (except photographs) can also be used in the UK without requiring permission for the purposes of news reporting. Any other re-use, for example commercial publication, would require the permission of the copyright holder.

Most documents provided by a government department or agency [*the Department for Infrastructure's TransportNI*] will be protected by Crown Copyright. Most Crown Copyright information can be re-used under the [Open Government Licence](#). For information about the OGL and about re-using Crown Copyright information, please see [The National Archives website](#).

Copyright in other documents may rest with a third party. For information about obtaining permission from a third party please see the [Intellectual Property Office's website](#).