

Highways England signs a further two unifying agreements with the recovery industry

Highways England has signed two further unifying agreements with the recovery industry, with the National Tyre Distributors Association (NTDA) and independent recovery industry work providers Green Flag, Allianz Partners, LV=Britannia Rescue, GEM Motoring Assist and Call Assist.

These agreements were signed by Highways England's Acting CEO Nick Harris at this year's PROFCON 21 event at Brooklands Motor Museum in Surrey on 29th July 2021.

They see Highways England making a commitment to both NTDA and the Independent Recovery Industry Work Providers to work together to improve communications and achieve best practice across the industry, whilst encouraging vehicle recovery operators (VRO's) and commercial tyre technicians to always work safely on the network.

The new agreements, which were initiated by the Professional Recovery Operators Federation, follow a ground-breaking industry first last March 2020, which saw Highways England sign an initial agreement to unite with strategic stakeholders within the independent recovery industry.

Nick Harris, acting Chief Executive, Highways England says:

In March 2020, Highways England signed a strategic partnership agreement to unite with the independent recovery industry. Since signing the agreement, we have taken positive steps to update recovery protocols on motorways and to improve our day-to-day operational communications between vehicle recovery operators and Highways England.

I am pleased to be signing two additional strategic partnership agreements with the independent recovery work providers and the NTDA. These agreements, which have been made possible by the help and support of PROF, further demonstrates Highways England's commitment to work more closely with the recovery industry.

With a range of independent bodies operating within the industry and Highways England responsible for the network they operate on, it became clear that further operational and strategic guidance would benefit all parties, which is how the initial agreement was born.

Since signing the original agreement just over a year ago, great progress has been made in working more closely with the recovery industry.

This work includes:

- the formation of a new Highways England Recovery Industry Executive Committee chaired by Nick Harris
- the creation of seven new operations led regional recovery groups, to improve day-to-day operational communication between VROs and Highways England.
- producing a new joint working protocol guidance document covering the recovery of large vehicles on the network
- launching a new direct 'Recovery In' phone numbers to enable improved two-way communication between VROs and Highways England traffic officers.
- creating four new recovery focussed signs to help support the safety of VROs working on our network and provide motorists with information and awareness of a VROs presence and recovery activity.

Richard Goddard, President of the Professional Recovery operators Federation (PROF) said:

I am very proud that PROF has played a pivotal role in initiating these independent strategic partnership agreements with Highways England. Highways England has been proactive in uniting industry stakeholders, vehicle recovery operators and independent industry work providers.

I am delighted that we are moving forward collectively to meet the challenges ahead and look forward to working with our strategic partners to improve safety, standards and public awareness on the strategic road network.

Damon Jowett, Head of Service Delivery, Green Flag said:

We're thrilled to be signing a strategic partnership agreement with Highways England to help achieve best practice across the industry and ensure drivers receive the best possible recovery service on England's roads.

Stefan Hay, Chief Executive of the NTDA said:

We are delighted to be entering into this new strategic working relationship with Highways England which is extremely important, and already proving to be highly productive, for the Association.

The level of access the NTDA and its members now have at both operational and executive level within Highways England is unprecedented and will, undoubtedly, prove to be extremely valuable in ensuring safer roadside working for those REACT trained commercial tyre technicians deployed across the strategic road

network.

Neil Worth, Chief Executive of GEM Motoring Assist said:

As an organisation we have spent the past 90 years working to achieve safer roads for everyone, be they our members, recovery operators or the wider community.

Highways England's input into our Blue Light Aware resource has been invaluable and this agreement will allow us to strengthen and develop our partnership work for the benefit of GEM members and all road users.

Ben Johnson, Director of Networks at Call Assist said:

Call Assist is passionate about working with Highways England and likeminded work providers, as we all share best practices to ensure we continue providing a first-class assistance service.

Highways England recognises recovery operators as an essential service and the importance in the role they play helping to clear incidents and keep traffic moving.

The principal purpose of the agreements is to guide the working partnerships in line with national agreements and guidance from within the vehicle recovery industry.

The agreements have given the opportunity for all involved to identify areas of joint working and respective areas of interest. It sets out a commitment to work together towards issue resolution and closer partner working in the future.

For those who do break down on a section of England's A roads or motorways it will mean they can expect to receive a more consistent recovery service, with improved communications between Highways England traffic officers and recovery operators.

Information for VROs about working safely on motorways, along with downloadable guidance materials, are available on the [Highways England recovery operator webpage](#).

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448

and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.