

Press release: Motorway staff celebrate two million hours accident free

A-One+, who are Highways England's main operations and maintenance supplier in Kent and Sussex have worked since July 2017 without any of its employees on the road network suffering a work-related injury.

Chris Sheppard, general manager at A-one+, said:

This is a remarkable achievement. These records don't happen by chance. Every morning when our people go to work, they're armed with the best safety equipment, training, processes, and support in the business.

Each year we look back at our performance, and we don't just show a video or open a book. From the office to the field employees, the importance of safety and wellbeing is continually emphasized.

The introduction of staff champions, has also reinforced a zero tolerance of workplace dangers and this focussed time and attention has helped reinforce our commitment to safety with every employee.

Karen Davies, from Highways England, added:

Safety is Highways England's top priority, and we congratulate A-One+ on reaching this milestone. Working on a high speed road is a high risk environment, but by keeping a relentless focus on safety and sharing safe working practices across our road network we look to minimise the risk to all our employees and contractors.

Highways England continue to lead the way in showing how to minimise this risk, to increase the safety of our staff and ensure that everyone goes home safely at the end of their shift. We will be sharing this practice and looking to see it replicated across our road network.

The last reportable incident within this operating area was in July 2017. Since then A-one+ have continued to work hard to improve safety awareness and preventing harm.

The team has managed to achieve this feat through:

- embedding culture through a Wellbeing, Improvement, Safety and Environmental Strategy known as WISHES

- increasing daily engagement between management and key staff members to address the challenges faced by the teams and counter complacency
- groups reviewing innovative practice and then sharing it with operatives, encouraging them to take ownership of their safety and best practice
- last year A-One+ carried out 3,345 inspections
- A-One+ has 9 safety champions across their depots
- launch of a bespoke web enabled safety observation app to prevent harm, where all observations such as near misses or improvement ideas are discussed and actioned on a weekly call attended by around 60 people including supply chain
- supplementing the app with a mental health section providing 24-hour mobile access to resources and support and a traffic management incursion section allowing safety trends to be analysed

Over the next five years Highways England plan to invest over £11 billion to modernise and maintain the network including a range of safety measures: upgrading junctions, removing bottlenecks, upgrading barriers and verges, and improved signage.

Road improvements under construction along the Kent Corridor also include creating a new junction on the M20 near Ashford, upgrading the M20 to a smart motorway between junctions 3 and 5 and work to improve the resilience of the M20 to cross channel disruption. In addition, detailed plans have been published to upgrade two junctions on the A2 and a new flyover for the M2 at junction 5 near Stockbury.

And in the longer term, a new Lower Thames Crossing – the biggest road project in a generation – will create a brand new link between Kent and Essex, spur growth and relieve the congestion at the Dartford Crossing.

Highways England has a target of reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured on motorways and major A roads by 40 per cent within 10 years.

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.