

# [Press release: New gritters take to the road](#)

The first delivery of the new gritters took place in October and will improve safety for drivers and workers due to the vehicles improved technology, ergonomics and enhanced visibility.

Despite weighing 26 tonnes and measuring a maximum of 2.5 meters wide, there have been a number of incidents where gritters have been struck by other vehicles.

Research carried out by Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) shows that vehicles stand out more if painted in one block colour and are solid in shape, which is where the new design has come from.

The new vehicles also contain innovative technology which includes being able to pre-programme them with information specific to each gritting route. This enables salt to be spread onto the road automatically, taking into account any specific requirements for bridges, landscape and other road features, allowing drivers to give their full attention to driving at all times.



Our winter fleet manager Jane Wilkins said:

Safety is our top priority and we are always looking at ways we can

improve our winter resilience. Using the research carried out by TRL and our own data, we have looked carefully at the number of incidents involving gritters to see what more can be done to improve safety and the service we provide.

The roll out of this £30 million programme started this year with 34 new vehicles in East Anglia. The remainder of the 157 vehicles, will be replaced over the next two years.

We're working closely with gritter manufacturer Romaquip on the roll-out of the new fleet.

Romaquip technical director Stephen McKeown said:

We are excited to be working with Highways England, manufacturing a new generation of winter vehicles with numerous safety and technical advances. It is a pleasure to work with an organisation that strives to develop and improve their service, actively partnering with us to achieve these goals.

It is clear to see that the specification of these vehicles has been derived from consciously deciding to improve safety for both operators and other road users, and that the innovation to improve efficiency and functionality has also been thoroughly considered.

Romaquip is committed to delivering the best quality machines to all of our customers, we welcome this improvement and look forward to working with Highways England over the years to come.



Romaquip technical director Stephen McKeown hands over the keys to Nick Harris, Highways England's executive director of operations

We currently have 535 winter vehicles patrolling the 4,400 miles of motorways and major A roads across the country.

### **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.