

Today's report from the NAO should serve as a wake-up call to ministers – Wayne David

Wayne

David MP, Labour's Shadow Minister for the Armed Forces and Defence Procurement, responding

to the National Audit Office's report on the MoD Equipment Plan, said:

"Today's report from the National Audit Office should serve as a wake-up call to ministers. The warning signs have been there for a long time but it is becoming increasingly clear that the Government is in danger of losing control of the defence budget.

"Ministers ought to have clearly defined priorities and should ensure that, in these uncertain times, Britain's defence expenditure should not be the subject of ill thought-out public expenditure cuts. The defence budget has been slashed since 2010 and the Government is only meeting the 2 per cent of GDP commitment through creative accounting.

"The Government should meet this commitment properly. Ministers also need to respond urgently to the concerns raised by the NAO. And they should confirm when the long-overdue National Shipbuilding Strategy will be published.

"Only Labour can deliver a serious, joined-up Defence Industrial Strategy, as we did in Government. Our approach would safeguard Britain's industrial base, secure high quality jobs throughout the supply chain, and protect our national sovereignty, while achieving value for money."

Press release: Planned roadworks in West Midlands: weekly summary for

Monday 30 January to Sunday 5 February 2017

The following summary of planned new and ongoing road improvements over the coming week is correct as of 27 January 2017 but could be subject to change due to weather conditions or unforeseen circumstances. All our improvement work is carried out with the aim of causing as little disruption as possible.

A38 – Alrewas to Cappers Lane including all associated slip roads: carriageway repairs

The Southbound carriageway and associated Slip Road closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 30 January until 5 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A38 – Cappers Lane to Alrewas and associated slip roads: sign inspections

The southbound carriageway and associated slip road closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 30 January until 1 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A38M – M6 links from out of city A38M: carriageway repairs

The Links from Out of City A38M will be closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 30 January until 5 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A449 – Gailey roundabout to Brewood road: carriageway repairs

The northbound carriageway will be closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 30 January until 5 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A45 – A4423 to Church road: carriageway repairs

The eastbound carriageway will be closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 30 January until 5 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A456 – M5 junction 3 roundabout: carriageway repairs

The roundabout will be closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 31 January

until 5 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A46 – Birmingham Road entry slip road: site investigation

The northbound entry slip road will be closed overnight between 7pm and 7am from 30 January until 5 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A46 – Warwick bypass link road northbound: site investigation

The northbound carriageway will be closed overnight between 7pm and 7am from 30 January until 5 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A46 – Leek Wootton entry slip road: site investigation

The northbound entry slip road will be closed overnight between 7pm and 7am from 30 January until 5 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A46 – Warwick bypass northbound: site investigation

The northbound carriageway will be closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 30 January until 5 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A5 – Gledrid roundabout and all approaches: roundabout widening scheme

The roundabout and associated approaches will be closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 30 January until 5 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A5 – Mile Oak exit slip road: carriageway repairs

The westbound exit slip road will be closed overnight for one night from 9pm 3 February until 6am the following morning (4 February). A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A500 – Talke junction island: carriageway repairs

The eastside of the island will be closed for 24 hours 7 days a week from 9 January ongoing until 31 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A500 – City Road entry slip road: carriageway repairs

The southbound entry slip road will be closed overnight for one night from 9pm 31 January until 6am the following morning (1 February). A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A45 – Stonebridge highway westbound: carriageway work

The road will be closed overnight on Monday 30 and Tuesday 31 January. A diversion route will be signposted.

A45 – Stonebridge highway eastbound: carriageway work

The road will be closed overnight on Tuesday 31 January. A diversion route will be signposted.

A46 – Coventry eastern bypass southbound: carriageway work

The road will be closed overnight on 01 February. A diversion route will be signposted.

M42 – junction 4 exit slip road: carriageway work

The northbound exit slip road will be closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 30 January until 9 February 23. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M42 – junction 1 entry and exit slip roads: off network carriageway work

The entry and exit slip roads will be closed overnight in both directions between 9pm and 5.30am from 1st February until 5th February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted

M42 – junction 10 entry slip road: carriageway work

The northbound entry slip road will be closed overnight between 8.30pm and 5am from 2 February until 4 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M5 – junction 6 to junction 5 northbound: major scheme work

The northbound carriageway and entry slip road at junction six will be closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 30 January until 1 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M5 – junction 5 to 4a northbound: major scheme work

The northbound carriageway including the northbound entry slip road at junction five will be closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 30 January until 2 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M5 – junction 5 to junction 6 including southbound entry slip road: major scheme work

The southbound carriageway including the entry slip road will be closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 2 February until 3 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M54 – junction 5 to junction 6: carriageway repairs

The Westbound carriageway will be closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 30 January until 5 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M54 – junction 5 entry slip road: carriageway repairs

The westbound entry slip road will be closed overnight for one night from 8pm 30 January until 6am the following morning (31 January). A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M54 – junction 6 to junction 7 including junction 6 entry slip road: carriageway repairs

The westbound carriageway including the entry slip road will be closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 30 January until 1 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M54 – junction 7 to junction 6 including junction 7 entry slip road: carriageway repairs

The eastbound carriageway including the entry slip road will be closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 1 February until 4 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 6 Salford Circus to M6: carriageway work

The carriageway will be closed overnight in both directions between 9pm and 6am from 30th January until 5th February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 2 entry slip road: carriageway work

The southbound entry slip road will be closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 30 January until 5 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – M5 to M6 junction 8 (western arm): carriageway work

The northbound carriageway will be closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 30 January until 5 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 8 to M5 (western arm): carriageway work

The southbound carriageway will be closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 30 January until 5 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – Hilton Park services exit slip road: carriageway work

The northbound exit slip road will be closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 30 January until 5 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – Hilton Park services exit and entry slip road: carriageway work

The southbound exit and entry slip roads will be closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 30 January until 5 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 9 entry slip road: carriageway work

The southbound entry slip road will be closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 30 January until 5 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 16 to junction 15: carriageway work

The southbound carriageway will be closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 30 January until 3 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 15 to junction 16 including junction 15 entry slip road: carriageway work

The northbound

carriageway and entry slip road will be closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 30 January until 1 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 6 exit slip road: carriageway work

The southbound exit slip road will be closed overnight for one night from 9pm 2 February until 6am the following morning (3 February). A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 11 entry slip road: carriageway work

The northbound entry slip road will be closed overnight for one night from 9pm 2 February until 6am the following morning (3 February). A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 7 entry slip road: carriageway work

The northbound entry slip road will be closed for 24/7 ongoing from 3 February until 10 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 7 to junction 8: carriageway work

The northbound carriageway will be closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 3 February until 5 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

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.

[Press release: Planned roadworks in East Midlands: weekly summary for Monday 30 January to Sunday 5 February 2017](#)

The following summary of planned new and ongoing road improvements over the coming week is correct as of 27 January but could be subject to change due to weather conditions or unforeseen circumstances. All our improvement work is carried out with the aim of causing as little disruption as possible.

M1 junction 28 to 35a, Nottinghamshire/Derbyshire/Yorkshire: smart motorway

There will be various restrictions in place on the M1 between junctions 28 and 35a to allow for the construction of the smart motorway. These include lane closures, speed restrictions, hard shoulder running and overnight slip road or carriageway closures.

On Monday 30 January the southbound carriageway between junctions 33 and 32, northbound entry and exit slip at junction 28, northbound entry and exit slip at Tibshelf services and the southbound entry slip at junction 33 will be closed overnight from 8pm until 6am.

On Tuesday 31 January the southbound carriageway between junctions 33 and 32, southbound entry and exit slip at junction 28, northbound entry and exit slip at Tibshelf services and the southbound entry slip at junction 33 will be closed overnight from 8pm until 6am.

On Wednesday 1 February the southbound carriageway between junctions 33 and 32, southbound entry and exit slip at junction 29a, southbound up and over at junction 34 and the southbound entry slip at junction 33 will be closed overnight from 8pm until 6am.

On Thursday 2 February the southbound carriageway between junctions 33 and 32, southbound entry and exit slip at junction 29, southbound up and over at junction 34, southbound entry and exit slip at Tibshelf services and the southbound entry slip at junction 33 will be closed overnight from 8pm until 6am.

On Friday 3 February the southbound carriageway between junctions 33 and 32, southbound entry and exit slip at junction 29, north and southbound up and over at junction 34, northbound entry and exit slip at Tibshelf services and the southbound entry slip at junction 33 will be closed overnight from 8pm until 6am.

On Saturday 4 February and Sunday 5 February the southbound up and over at junction 33 and southbound up and over at junction 32 will be closed overnight from 8pm until 6am.

M1 junction 19 to 16, Northamptonshire: smart motorway

From Monday 30 January until Wednesday 1 February there will be a full carriageway closure northbound between junctions 16 and 18, two lanes closed northbound between junctions 15a and 16 and two lanes closed southbound between junctions 18 and 16 from 9pm to 6am. At the same time the entry and exit slip northbound at junction 16 and Watford Gap services, exit slip at junction 18 and M45 will be closed.

On Friday 3 February two lanes will be closed north and southbound between junctions 16 and 18 from 9pm to 6am.

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[Press release: Planned roadworks in Kent and Sussex: weekly summary for Monday 30 January to Sunday 5 February 2017.](#)

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M20 junctions 3 to 5, Kent: smart motorway surveys

Work to improve journeys continue this week on the M20 between junctions 3 & 5. There will be various lane closures in both directions on Monday 30 January for 5 nights, between 8pm and 6am. Surveys are scheduled to be complete in April 2017.

M23 junctions 8 to 10a, South Nutfield to Crawley: smart motorway surveys

Work to improve journeys continue this week on the M23 between junctions 8 & 10a. There will be various lane closures in place in both directions overnight on Monday 30 January for 5 nights, between 8pm and 6am. Surveys are scheduled to be complete in April 2017.

A2 Darenth to Bean, Kent: carriageway resurfacing

Work to improve journeys continue this week on the A2. There will be a full closure of the westbound carriageway between the Bean B255 junction and the Darenth A282 junction on Monday 30 January for 5 nights between 10pm and 6am. There will be a clearly signed diversion route via the B255, A206 and A282. Works are scheduled to be complete in early March 2017.

A20 Western Heights to Courtwood, Kent: carriageway surveys

Work to improve journeys between Courtwood junction and Western Heights roundabout take place this week. There will be a lane 1 closure on the westbound carriageway between the Courtwood junction and the A260 on Monday 30 January for 2 nights between 8pm and 6am.

There will be a lane 1 closure on the westbound carriageway between Western Heights roundabout and Courtwood interchange overnight on Wednesday 1 February between 8pm and 6am.

There will be a full closure of the eastbound carriageway between the A260 and Western Heights roundabout on Thursday 2 February for 3 nights between 8pm and 6am . A clearly signed diversion will be in place via A260, B2011 and the A256.

A20 Dover, Kent: junction improvement work

Work to improve journeys by the Port of Dover continues this work. Phased work continues at the York Street junction and at the Union Street junction. Lane closures remain in place in both directions between the Limekiln and Woolcomber junctions. There will be no right turn facility along the section of the A20 for both eastbound and westbound traffic. Clearly signed diversions will be in place to direct traffic through the works.

For more information on the project, [visit the Port of Dover's website.](#)

A21 Tonbridge to Pembury, Kent: major improvement

Work to improve journeys on the A21 between Tonbridge and Pembury continues this week. A 40mph speed limit remains in place 24/7 between the Vauxhall interchange and the A228.

A full closure will be in place overnight between 8pm and 6am on Thursday 2 February on the southbound carriageway between Quarry Hill and Longfield roundabout and on the northbound carriageway between Longfield roundabout and Vauxhall interchange. In addition Longfield Road will be closed in both directions between Longfield roundabout and Knights Park roundabout. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the A26, A2014, A26 and the A228.

Two way traffic lights will be in place on the A21 overnight between 8pm and 6am from Monday 30 January for three nights and overnight on Friday 3 February.

Tonbridge Road will remain closed after Pembury Hospital up to and including Longfield Road roundabout until Spring 2017. A clearly signed diversion route will be in place via the A228 and the A21.

The scheme is due to be completed in Summer 2017.

For further information, [visit the scheme website](#).

A27 Pevensey, East Sussex: resurfacing works

Work to improve journeys commence this week on the A27 between the Polegate bypass, and the A259 Pevensey junction. The eastbound carriageway will be closed overnight between Monday 30 January for 5 nights, between 8pm and 6am. There will be a clearly signed diversion via the A22, A2290 and A259. Works are expected to be completed by the end of February.

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[News story: Royal Air Force playing major role in world's premier air combat exercise](#)

Based at Nellis Air Force Base, Exercise Red Flag pits 'Blue' coalition forces against hostile 'Red Force' aggressors, mirroring real-life threats in air-to-air, air-to-ground, space and cyber warfare.

Red Flag's live element takes place over the US Air Force's premier military training area in Nevada; over 15,000 square miles of airspace and 2.9 million acres of land – an impossible scale to achieve in Europe.

Speaking about the Exercise, Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

The RAF is playing a major role alongside our greatest ally in the world's leading aerial combat training exercise.

Britain's pilots and aircrews will receive unparalleled training and an opportunity to sharpen the combat skills they are demonstrating every day in the fight against Daesh.

Training alongside our US partners and other nations shows how the UK is stepping up internationally, ensuring maximum interoperability with our allies, and in doing so helping keep Britain safer and more secure.

Typhoon jets, from 6 Squadron, RAF Lossiemouth, are operating in a swing-role capacity, fighting their way into hostile airspace, launching precision strikes on ground targets and fighting their way out again.

Typhoons taking on fuel from a RAF Voyager tanker during Exercise Red Flag.

Working with the US Air Force (USAF) F-35A Lightning II for the first time, and with USAF F-22 Raptors; the exercise has been a hugely rewarding exposure to 5th Generation aircraft for RAF crews ahead of the F-35B's introduction into the RAF's combat inventory in 2018.

US Air Force aircraft on take off at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada USA during Exercise RED FLAG, 2017.

This is also the first time the RAF's Voyager is taking part in the exercise. The Voyager is providing key air-to-air refuelling capability during the exercise, while a Sentinel and Rivet Joint are gathering intelligence and other mission-critical information.

Speaking from the exercise, Group Captain Graham Pemberton, RAF Detachment Commander said:

Red Flag replicates truly challenging, high-end warfare, from realistic aerial combat to emerging cyber and space threats. It's as close as we can get to the real thing.

Testing ourselves against highly capable enemy aggressors is hugely beneficial and improves and readies our personnel, from pilots to those in crucial support roles, for real world operations.

It's a privilege for us to work with our US Air Force and Royal

Australian Air Force counterparts and to cement our relationships with them at an exercise of this scale.

The exercise will run until early February and marks the start of three months of RAF Typhoon activity in the USA.