

# Welsh transport network ready for Winter

The winter of 2009/10 saw stocks at some local authorities reach crisis point, and Economy Secretary Ken Skates is keen to ensure Wales is fully prepared over the coming months, whatever the weather.

Mr Skates said:

“I’ve been on record more than once commending the excellent work that goes into keeping our roads as safe as possible 24/7, 365 days a year, with the winter period often the most challenging for all concerned.

“Whether it be at a local or national level, it’s vital for communities and economies across Wales to have the confidence to continue to go about their business safely and with minimal possible disruption. There are a number of measures in place to make this a reality.

“Replenishment of salt stocks throughout Wales has been undertaken to provide a total stock holding of 216,000t. Arrangements are in place to replenish these stocks as the need arises, with further salt reserves held by Welsh Government if needed.

“Thirteen new front line salt spreaders are available for use on the motorway and nearby trunk roads in advance of the winter season to further increase winter resilience, with all plant and equipment serviced to ensure everything is ready to go.

“Road side weather stations have also been serviced, with additional weather stations installed at beneficial locations for this winter season to ensure the most accurate weather and road condition information is available.

“This is all in addition to the usual patrols of trunk road before and after adverse weather to ensure drainage systems are working and our agreement with bus operators and others to notify Traveline Cymru immediately of any disruptions so that the public are notified at the earliest possible opportunity.”

On rail preparation for winter, the Economy Secretary said:

“Last year saw too many trains cancelled because of leaves on the track – something I felt National Rail and Arriva could have worked together better to prevent. While rail infrastructure is non-

devolved I have asked my officials to press Network Rail on maximising their use of the specialist Railhead Treatment Trains and to press Arriva Trains Wales on their rolling stock and train-crew availability.

“I understand that Network Rail in consultation with Arriva have already undertaken additional vegetation clearance to minimise the effects of leaf fall, while Arriva have confirmed they have put in place additional measures to ensure the maximum number of trains are available during the winter. I am hopeful that these measures will be successful in reducing disruption over the coming months.”