

Plan ahead for your journey this Christmas

✘ The travelling public was urged to check their journeys in advance today as more freezing weather and snow showers were forecast up until Christmas Day. The Met Office predicted further freezing temperatures across the country and some snow showers, particularly in the North and the East.

With further cold snaps forecast, Transport Scotland, the national transport agency, recommends that travellers access the live information available on their Traffic Scotland website and from the regular travel updates broadcast by the media and public transport operators.

Transport Minister Keith Brown said:-“With many schools and businesses breaking up for the holidays and hundreds of thousands of people plan their festive getaway, winter staff at across the country remain on duty round the clock to monitor conditions and carry out treatments wherever required.

“Our six point plan introduced last week ensures we are more prepared than ever to help keep Scotland moving. While we are doing all we can, drivers can help make the festive season safer and happier by planning their journeys in advance.

“Journey planning advice also applies to people heading for buses, trains and airports. Before setting off, travellers should check regular travel and weather updates listen to police advice for driving and visit the Traffic Scotland or public transport websites for up-to-the-minute information.”

More than 26,000 iPhone users have already downloaded the free Traffic Scotland app from the App Store and more are encouraged to do the same.

The Traffic Scotland website has also experienced

unprecedented use with more than 21 million hits in one day, more than three times normal usage for an entire month.

Winter Facts

- * The 3,500 km (2,000 miles) of trunk road in Scotland. The trunk road network carries 37 per cent of Scotland's traffic and 62 per cent of the country's HGVs. It has an asset value of £12 billion

- * Winter Service operations involve over 30 depots, almost 200 vehicles and more than 400 staff to provide a round-the-clock service on the network

- * Using Met Office data and information from over 100 ice stations, each operating company monitors weather forecasts at a local level to enable them to respond quickly and appropriately to weather changes

- * The Traffic Scotland System operates from Traffic Scotland Control Centre in Glasgow. Through use of its variable message signs on the network, 'live eye' CCTV and website it offers real time travel information on the network. Weather forecast warnings and updates on travel conditions are relayed to the public via this system

- * The Traffic Scotland website has over 100 'live-eye' cameras

- * Traffic Customer Care Line receives and forwards calls to the appropriate contact for enquiries relating to sections of the Scottish Motorway and Trunk Road Network maintained by the various operating companies

- * The service exploits the opportunity to 'hand over' road users to a public transport option when they are calling about roadworks, congestion, planned events etc and also enables advice on public transport to take account of what is happening on the Scottish motorway and trunk road network. This is unique in the UK

- * Traveline Scotland service is a 24/7 days a week 365 days a year service. Public transport operators participating in Traveline provided additional funding in partnership with Transport Scotland