



Speed indicators Devices

SpIDs – Policy and procedures

Version 1.3 – October 2022



SpIDs

Executive summary

For many years the difference between Speed Indication Devices (SpIDs) and Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) have not been clearly set out by the council and a clear set of rules and guidelines on SpIDs has been lacking. The legacy of signs that exist on the network, with fragmented ownership and maintenance liabilities has resulted in a reactive approach to requests for SpIDs. This document clearly sets out the requirements for SpIDs moving forward and seeks to set out some rules for legacy sites.

Introduction

This document sets out the differences between SpIDs and VAS with the aim of setting out the rules and procedures required for parish or town councils, who are seeking to install SpIDs in their local areas with the main aim of tackling speeding and inconsiderate drivers.

Background

SpIDs are used throughout the county as a safety or speed calming solution. Most have been purchased and are deployed by Parish and Town Councils. A SpID sign can be an effective tool to tackle perceived or actual speeding on the network. However, the longer a sign stays in one location the more likely it could lose its effectiveness that over time.

Any sign that is placed on the highway network to convey a message to a highway user should follow the rules set out in the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016 (TSRGD2016)

SpIDs should not be confused with Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) which provide an illuminated version of a prescribed traffic sign when triggered by a vehicle (although often linked to speed they can be activated by the height of a vehicle for example).

Technically a SpID can only be used as a temporary sign. These are covered under Schedule 13 Part 9 of the TSRGD2016 which allows the council the flexibility to introduce signs like SpIDs. Under these rules however the regulations place a limit of 6 months on temporary signs meaning that they cannot be left in place indefinitely at a single location. This time limit did not previously exist in the regulations and was introduced to support the government aims to reduce sign clutter and "Safeguard their effectiveness¹", it is for this reason the county will require SpIDs to be moved or taken down periodically to maximise the impact that they can have, subject to limited number of exemptions.

¹ Paragraph 9.1.3 – Chapter 1, Traffic Signs Manual



SpID vs VAS

As noted in earlier there is a distinct difference between a SpID and a VAS. The below images offer a clear distinction:



This is a typical SpID device. As a vehicle approaches the sign it checks the speed and if required illuminates a message which can include a speed, happy/sad face, safety message etc.



This is a VAS (Vehicle activate sign). In this example the sign is also activate by the speed of a vehicle but rather than presenting feedback to the driver it illuminates (when triggered) a standard traffic sign to warn the driver of an upcoming hazard

Legislation

SpIDs are not specifically prescribed in the Traffic Signs Regulations & General Directions but are widely used and accepted across the UK. As noted earlier the most relevant section of the TSRGD is Schedule 13, Part 9 of the 2016 regulations. This Schedule provides a raft of regulations that allow councils to place "Other temporary signs" on the network.

Whereas VAS signs are prescribed in the regulations and can be installed as permanent fixtures, signs that are introduced under schedule 13 part 9 are "Temporary" and have a 6-month limit when placed on the network. The 6-month limit was a new introduction as part of the latest TSRGD and it was not prescribed in the previous versions of the statutory instrument.

Moving forward

To ensure compliance with Regulations whilst accepting that some signs were installed prior to the latest regulations the following rules will be applied to all SpIDs on the county council highway network.



Signs installed after 1st Jan 2022

Any SpID introduced after this date will be treated as a temporary sign in line with the rules set out under Schedule 13 part 9 of the TSRGD2016. Therefore, the SpID must either be moved to a different point or location or taken down completely if no other site or location is available. This should be between 3 and 6 months of when it was placed at a given point or location. There then must be a break of at least 1 month before the sign can be returned to the same point or location it was moved or taken down from.

This will ensure compliance with Regulations and help to maintain the effectiveness of the signs.

The county council will apply a single exception to this requirement. In line with our aims to reduce our impact on the environment and supporting green technologies the council will waive the 6-month limit for those units that are solar powered, the increased complexity/cost of moving a solar unit is accepted as a challenge for town and parish councils and where the sign is agreed, on installation, to be self-supporting the council will apply a waiver to the 6-month rule. Units that require recharging or another form of power will be required to be moved in line with the above requirements.

Signs Installed between 2016 – 31st December 2021

SpIDs that were installed during this period should be subject to the temporary 6-month limit rules. However, it is accepted that there could be an unexpected financial burden if the council retrospectively applied the requirements set out above. It is therefore expected that SpIDs which were purchased for a sole location will be allowed to remain until it reaches its end of life. However, when a replacement is sought the requirement set out above will be applied i.e., the SpID must either be moved to a different point or location or taken down completely if no other site or location is available. This should be between 3 and 6 months of when it was placed at a given point or location. There then must be a break of at least 1 month before the sign can be returned to the same point or location it was moved or taken down from.

Signs installed pre-2016

The regulation prior to 2016 did not place a time limit on the duration of a temporary sign. Signs installed prior to this date will be permitted to remain in a single location (if that is how they were installed) until the end of its operational life. When a replacement sign is sought the new requirements will be applied and further locations will need to be sought.

Data collection

Whilst the SpID will remain the property and responsibility of the party that purchases it the county council will need to know the make, model and technical specifications of the unit for our records. If the SpID is capable of collecting survey data whilst deployed the council would expect this to be declared as part of the installation process. Furthermore, it is a requirement that this data to be shared with the council on request.



SpIDs Procedure

The procurement and installation of– funded by Parish & Town Councils

1. The Parish/Town Council must confirm that funding has been identified and approved, and that there is a firm commitment to purchase a SpID, prior to involving LCC in any assessment / approval process.
2. The type of SpID intended must be communicated to LCC Speed Management Team as early in the process as possible. There is a weight limit restriction if mounting to a county lighting column. If mounting to a lighting column is intended, the unit should be no more than 0.3m² in size and no more than 20kg in total weight including the SpID unit, mounting bracket, batteries and solar panels, however a full review with the street lighting team will be required before approval can be provided as there are variances in the limits depending on the column as covered in item 5. Units will not be attached to concrete columns.

If the Parish/Town Council wish to purchase a battery powered SpID exceeding these limits, or a solar powered SpID, they must be mounted on a bespoke post to the correct specification.

Solar units must be agreed and approved with the council prior to installation to ensure that they are exempt from regular relocating as per rule 10.

3. A list of potential locations², where speeding is perceived to be a problem, should be compiled, specifying street lighting columns if possible, or alternatively grid reference co-ordinates. Consideration should also be given to:
 - a. The radar range on SpIDs between manufacturers may differ, this must be considered when identifying potential locations.
 - b. Consider how close the SpID is located to a speed limit change.
4. A Lancashire County Council representative will conduct a risk assessment on the intended locations, considering the following:
 - a. Visibility of SpID to drivers
 - b. Length and layout of approaching highway
 - c. Safe and legal parking needed for deployment of sign
 - d. Suitability of lighting columns

² Parish/Town Councils are responsible for consulting with any residents within the vicinity of the proposed sign, to ensure that they have no objections to the planned installation.



5. For battery powered SpIDs meeting the criteria, once the intended lighting column locations have been agreed, they each require a structural assessment to be carried out by the Street Lighting Team. In this case the Parish Council must provide a purchase order to LCC Street Lighting.

For solar powered or battery powered SpIDs exceeding the size and weight limit, requiring a bespoke post, there are two options for installation:

- Option 1
 - Posts may be installed by the sign supplier or a contractor. In this case the Parish/Town Council will need to contact lhsstreetworks@lancashire.gov.uk to request an Section 50 license (there is a license application fee for this), and the work must not commence until the license has been obtained.
- Option 2
 - Posts may be installed by the LCC Street Lighting Team.
 - In this case the Parish Council must provide a purchase order to LCC Street Lighting for the installation of the bespoke post (and SpID unit if required).

6. Upon completion of the lighting column structural assessment, or the approved installation of the bespoke post, the Parish/Town Council can proceed with the purchase of the mounting plates / brackets.

7. LCC will then arrange for the mounting plates / brackets to be installed at the approved sites.

The point at which the installation of the plates / brackets is being organised and carried out, is an ideal time to order the SpID unit, to optimise the warranty period.

8. The initial installation of the SpID, and future movement between locations, must only be carried out by a competent person who has received appropriate training for the correct installation of the equipment, working at height and working within the highway.

It is the Parish/Town Council's responsibility to confirm that the person has received the appropriate training.

They must also be provided with a suitable platform stepladder, high visibility jacket, hard hat, and steel toe-capped footwear, for their personal safety.

9. The personnel being used by the Parish/Town Council for the initial installation and future movement of the SpID must be fully insured, and this must include public liability insurance, provided by the insurance policy belonging to the SpID owner.

10. Once the SpID equipment is installed and operational, as these devices are deemed temporary, you must follow the guidance outlined in the policy document for duration of period at the same location. The only exception to this is units that are solar powered and require no intervention (for example charging the batteries), these units can remain beyond the 6-month limit however it is strongly recommended that they are moved periodically to maintain their effectiveness with drivers.



11. The Parish/Town Council is responsible for any maintenance or repairs to signs, and bespoke posts that they own.
12. Please note that any costs incurred by Lancashire County Council for site inspections and installations will be rechargeable to the Parish/Town Council.

Racing limit

A racing limit is required to avoid unintended consequences of the introduction of a SpID. Unfortunately, some reckless and irresponsible drivers see SpIDs as a challenge to try and achieve a display of the highest speed possible, and a SpID installed without a display limit can inadvertently encourage racing at very high speeds.

It is therefore a requirement that SpIDs are purchased with an 'anti-race' facility (maximum display speed cut-off), with the cut-off limit being set at a maximum of 15mph above the posted speed limit.

If you have purchased a SpID prior to the issuing of this guidance, and you do not have a racing limit set, please contact your SpID supplier for further advice.

Contact us:

For further information on SpID purchase & installation in Lancashire, please contact SpeedManagement@lancashire.gov.uk

Speeding issues

The above email address is not to be used for reporting issues with speeding vehicles which may need to be addressed with further action by Lancashire County Council and/or Lancashire Constabulary. Please report these concerns using: Lancashire Road Safety Partnership website [Speed Concern Submission. – Lancashire Road Safety Partnership \(lancsroadsafety.co.uk\)](#)

If residents witness regular incidents of nuisance or dangerous driving, they can contact the police directly either by the non-emergency telephone number: 101, or on the Lancashire Constabulary 'Do It Online' webpage ([Home - Lancashire Constabulary - Report Online](#)), with a record of the registration numbers of the vehicles (along with dashcam footage if you have this to assist in prosecution).

