



Department for  
**Transport**

From Mike Penning MP, Parliamentary  
Under Secretary of State

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Our Ref:

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*Dear Mr Silverman*

Thank you for sending me a copy of your report "Our Littered Motorways – Why the legislation is not working". As you know, I have an interest in the matter of litter on our roads, particularly motorways and trunk roads which form the Strategic Road Network for which I have Ministerial responsibility. Like you, I look forward to a time when our roads are relatively litter-free.

Litter clearance on high-speed roads is a dangerous task and, whilst I am keen for the Highways Agency to continue with its programme of litter clearance on the motorway network, I support their efforts in aiming to reduce the number of deaths and injuries of its road workers.

There is a balance to be struck between carrying out regular maintenance duties such as safe litter clearance and keeping traffic moving on our busy motorways, as litter clearance inevitably requires the use of traffic management.

Nevertheless, the Agency, via its contractors, is expected to meet the standards set out in the Code of Practice associated with the Environmental Protection Act 1990, and is, from time to time, made aware of accumulations of litter on particular parts of the motorway network which need a more stringent approach to keep them clear.

The Agency's use of contractors is not unusual, but is in line with most competitive services which are contracted out by the Government.

The Highways Agency is keen to combine litter clearance with improved educational messages to stop people from dropping or throwing litter from their vehicles, so they were pleased to attend Defra's National Litter Convention on 16 December. Other attendees included CPRE, Keep Britain Tidy, representatives from local authorities and businesses such as McDonalds, Coca Cola and British Plastic Federation. Full details can be found on the Defra website <http://ww2.defra.gov.uk/news/2010/12/16/litter/> Attendees were asked to consider endorsing a set of principles aimed at setting out what they are doing to meet the challenge and reduce littering in the Defra 'Love Where You Live' campaign.

Thank you again for sharing your report with me.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'm/p', with a horizontal line underneath the 'p'.

**MIKE PENNING**