

A9

THE HIGHLAND HIGHWAY

INFORMATION FOR DRIVERS

SCOTTISH OFFICE
Roads Directorate



YOU CAN MAKE THE A9 A SAFER ROAD

In recent years fatal and serious accidents on the A9 between Perth and Inverness have caused much concern. Between 1987 and 1989 forty-eight people were killed and nearly 450 injured, a high proportion of these seriously.



The new A9 was designed in the 1970s to the best standards then available for new single carriageways. The road design uses "sweeping curves" which can permit overtaking. However, drivers must ensure that they can see ahead, and take care in judging the speed of oncoming traffic before overtaking.

The new A9 has less casualties than the old A9 which meandered through the towns and villages between Perth and Inverness. There were 72% less casualties between 1973 and 1983 when the majority of the road improvements were carried out. This compares with a 14% reduction on other Scottish roads over the same period.



The improved standard has led to increased traffic speeds which have certainly contributed to the large proportion of fatal and serious accidents.

The police patrol the A9 on a regular basis using both marked and unmarked cars which are equipped with video and speed detection equipment. The police will stop and charge motorists who exceed the speed limit and those who are guilty of other driving offences, such as dangerous overtaking manoeuvres.



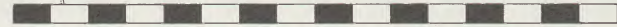
THE MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR EXCEEDING THE SPEED LIMIT CURRENTLY STANDS AT £400.

THE MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR CARELESS AND INCONSIDERATE DRIVING CURRENTLY STANDS AT £1000.

IN ADDITION TO FINES YOU ARE LIKELY TO RECEIVE PENALTY POINTS WHICH COULD LEAD TO THE LOSS OF YOUR DRIVING LICENCE.

DON'T SPEED—YOU MIGHT CAUSE A FAMILY HEARTBREAK.

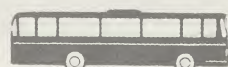
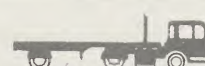
SPEED LIMITS—WATCH YOUR SPEED



The national speed limit applies on the A9, that is 60 mph (96 kph) on single carriageway sections and 70 mph (116 kph) on dual carriageway sections.

These limits are the MAXIMUM permitted speeds for vehicles, they do not indicate that it is safe to travel at that speed. You may need to reduce your speed to suit different driving conditions.

Different limits apply to other types of vehicles:

		Single	Dual
			
CARS <i>(including car derived vans and motorcycles)</i>		60	70
VEHICLES TOWING CARAVANS OR TRAILERS		50	60
BUSES & COACHES			
GOODS VEHICLES (not exceeding 7.5 tons when laden)			
ARTICULATED GOODS VEHICLES (not exceeding 7.5 tons when laden)		40	50
HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES (exceeding 7.5 tons when laden)			
ARTICULATED GOODS VEHICLES (exceeding 7.5 tons when laden)			

OVERTAKING



Inconsiderate and dangerous overtaking is one of the main reasons for the high number of fatal and serious accidents on the single carriageway sections of the A9. Almost one-third of accidents between 1987 and 1989 involved overtaking manoeuvres of some kind.

DO NOT OVERTAKE unless you are sure you can do so without danger to others or yourself. Before you start to overtake make sure that the road is clear far enough ahead and behind, particularly on curves. Remember approaching vehicles may be travelling at high speed. Once you have started to overtake; move quickly and safely past the vehicle you are overtaking and leave it plenty of room. Then move back safely to the left side of the road as soon as you can.



**AVOID DANGEROUS AND RECKLESS OVERTAKING MANOEUVRES.
IF IN DOUBT—DO NOT OVERTAKE.**

SIGNS—WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

Over its length the A9 alternates between dual and single carriageway. New signs have recently been erected to give drivers additional information and to remind them of the type of carriageway they are travelling on.

Some of the signs you will see on the A9 are:

SINGLE CARRIAGEWAY



Two-way traffic.

Maximum speed 60 mph.



Maximum speed 60 mph—two-way traffic ahead. (These signs are located at the start of single carriageway sections.)

Dual Carriageway Advance Information Sign.

Dual
carriageway
2 miles
ahead

DUAL CARRIAGEWAY



End of Dual Carriageway. (Two-way traffic ahead.)

Dual Carriageway Section.

Dual
carriageway

ROAD MARKINGS



Road markings play an important part in road safety. The A9 is no exception and in particular the use of hatched (chevron) markings in the middle of the carriageway will be observed at different locations along the route. Although mainly at junctions, they have also been installed at bends where overtaking is discouraged.



Pitlochry Bypass

Where the chevron has a solid white edge line on your side of the road you **MUST NOT** enter the area except in an emergency.



Blair Atholl Junction



Moy Junction

The Highway Code says that these markings "... are to separate traffic streams liable to be a danger to each other or to protect traffic turning right. **DO NOT** drive over these areas if you can avoid doing so".



On single carriageway sections of the A9 arrows indicating two-way traffic will be seen at frequent intervals.

POLICE SPEED CHECK—AREA SIGNS



You will see this sign at locations along the A9. It marks areas where from detailed investigations, high vehicle speeds would seem to be a major factor in the number and severity of road accidents.

These sites will be afforded particular attention by the police and will be monitored closely by road engineers.

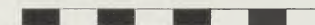


IT DOES NOT MEAN THAT THEY ARE THE ONLY AREAS THAT WILL BE SUBJECT TO POLICE ACTIVITY.

THE SPEED LIMIT ALONG ALL OF THE A9 WILL BE VIGOROUSLY ENFORCED USING MARKED AND UNMARKED CARS.



DRIVER FATIGUE



The section of A9 between Perth and Inverness and north to the Cromarty Firth is a Clearway.

This means NO STOPPING on the carriageway or the verge is permitted.

If you intend to stop, use one of the lay-bys which are located at regular intervals, or stop in one of the local towns or villages where parking and services are available—these are frequently signed along the route.

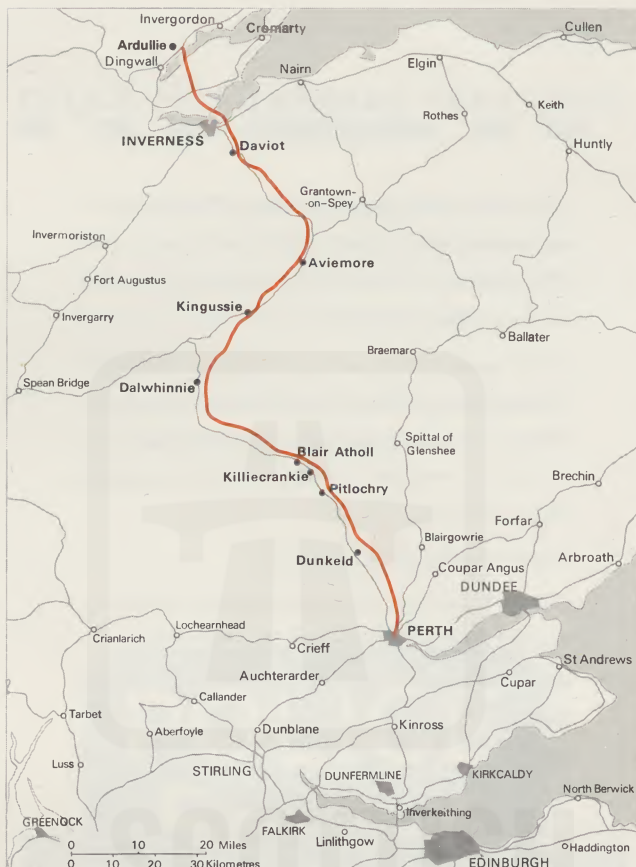
Advance information of lay-bys.

DO NOT hold up a long queue of traffic. Use the lay-by to stop and allow the following traffic to pass.

Drive with consideration to other road users at all times.

Driver fatigue is very often a major cause of accidents. Driving for longer than 2–2½ hours can seriously impair judgement.

DON'T DRIVE FOR TOO LONG WITHOUT A BREAK.



This booklet has been produced with the assistance of Tayside Regional Council, Highland Regional Council, Tayside Police and Northern Constabulary.

We hope this information has been of use to you and we wish you a safe and pleasant journey on the A9.

PRODUCED IN THE INTERESTS OF
ROAD SAFETY

SCOTTISH OFFICE
Roads Directorate



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