EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO

THE M621 MOTORWAY (SPEED LIMIT) REGULATIONS 2000 (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2007

2007 No. 349

1. This explanatory memorandum has been prepared by the Highways Agency, an Executive Agency of the Department for Transport, and is laid before Parliament by command of Her Majesty.

2. Description

2.1 This instrument extends the existing 50 miles per hour speed limit on the M621 Motorway westbound (anti-clockwise) carriageway by 1880 metres south-east of its current start point, and imposes a 50 miles per hour speed limit on the Junction 7 westbound entry slip road.

3. Matters of special interest to the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments

3.1 None

4. Legislative Background

4.1 This instrument has been made under Section 17(2) and (3) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, which empowers the Secretary of State to make regulations with respect to the use of special roads generally and, as in this case, with respect to particular lengths of motorway. It amends the M621 Motorway (Speed Limit) Regulations 2000 (S.I. 2000 No. 1811), which imposed a 50 miles per hour speed limit on both carriageways between Junction 1 and Junction 6.

5. Extent

5.1 This instrument applies to England.

6. European Convention on Human Rights

6.1 As the instrument is subject to negative resolution procedure and does not amend primary legislation, no statement is required.

7. Policy background

7.1 One of the prime policy objectives of the Department for Transport is to improve road safety.

The M621 is an urban motorway that runs through Leeds and carries a high volume of traffic. It was built with tighter bends than on rural motorways, and the junctions are close together resulting in an unusually high level of weaving traffic - which made the imposition of the original 50mph Speed Limit Regulation essential.

Both carriageways of the M621 are already subject to a 50mph speed limit beginning at Junction 6 and running all the way round to Junction 1. However, the westbound (anti-clockwise) carriageway forms a particularly tight bend between Junction 7 and Junction 6 and West Yorkshire Police have said that they consider there to be a need for a speed reduction between Junctions 7 and 6 on safety grounds.

The Police have therefore requested that the start of the 50mph on the westbound carriageway be extended by 1880 metres to the beginning of Junction 7, prior to the bend.

In addition, a 50mph speed limit will also need to be imposed on the westbound entry slip road at Junction 7.

During the statutory consultation process the draft SI was issued to 27 people including members of the emergency services. The process began on 24 June 2005 and ended on 16 September 2005. There were no responses to the consultation.

8. Impact

8.1 A Regulatory Impact Assessment has not been prepared for this instrument, as it has no impact on business, charities or voluntary bodies.

8.2 The impact on the public sector it is believed will be improved road safety.

9. Contact

Paul Thomas at the Highways Agency Tel: 0113 283 6446 or e-mail: paul.thomas@highways.gsi.gov.uk can answer any queries regarding the instrument.