



Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Dear Secretary of State,

**MANDATING NATIONAL HIGHWAYS SECTOR SCHEME #7 CERTIFICATION FOR ROAD MARKING
CONTRACTORS ON ALL PUBLIC ROADS**

I write on behalf of the Road Safety Markings Association (RSMA) to highlight my concern that in its desire to bolster the recovery of the nation's economy through infrastructure investment, the Government may be unaware of the potential risk to public safety should such investment be used to employ road marking contractors not certified under the National Highways Sector Scheme #7 (NHSS #7).

The RSMA represents the United Kingdom road marking industry and is one of the largest specialist trade bodies in the Highways Sector. Established in 1976, the RSMA has played, and continues to play, a pivotal role in supporting, training, assessing and self-regulating its members and, through the NHSS #7, continual improvement of professional and safety standards.

Companies audited by UKAS accredited bodies and certified as operating to the NHSS #7 together with BS EN ISO 9001:

- Prioritise the Health & Safety of their workforce.
- Focus on quality as an objective.
- Reduce costs for client and contractor.
- Maintain a properly trained and competent workforce.
- Meet the industry benchmark for standards.
- Provide a basis for continuous improvement.
- Ensure that all processes are planned.
- Promote confidence in quality management through robust transparent systems.
- Possess appropriate technical knowledge and experience across a fully trained workforce.

It is anomalous therefore that whereas road marking contractors working on the Strategic Road Network and the majority of the TfL network must be NHSS #7 accredited, and thus able to demonstrate through audit the standards of professionalism and safety outlined above, no similar requirement exists across the Local Authority road network. In not employing NHSS #7 accredited contractors, Local Authorities have in the past failed to protect themselves against prosecution for employing a contractor who has engaged in dangerous practices and I urge you to address this inconsistency to secure value for money works for the taxpayer and the safety of road users and road marking operatives alike.

As road marking operatives are often employed on live sites with moving traffic and work with 200° C molten material, the Health and Safety of the workforce is a priority for the RSMA, hence its insistence that contracting members are certified to NHSS #7 and BS EN ISO 9001 by a UKAS accredited body. All NHSS #7 accredited contractor employees have achieved or are undertaking the NVQ Level 2 in Pavement Marking, have demonstrated their competency and skill in the role, and undertake refresher training every 4 years.

I believe it imperative that **ONLY** NHSS #7 accredited road marking contractors should be permitted to undertake marking works on public roads. During such a key period and beyond, it is essential that those completing the key works to deliver '*once in a generation*' transformative change are appropriately trained and qualified, that works are completed properly and professionally, that the safety of the road user is maintained and the Health and Safety of the workforce employed on our roads remains paramount.

I urge you to mandate that NHSS #7 certification of road marking contractors becomes a requirement for **ALL** road marking activity undertaken on **ALL** public roads and would ask that you confirm your intent so to do.

Yours faithfully,



S D McInroy
Chief Executive
Road Safety Markings Association

19 May 20

Copies to:

Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP – Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government
Baroness Vere of Norbiton – Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Mr J McMahon MP – Shadow Secretary of State for Transport
Mr H Merriman MP – Chair, Transport Select Committee
Mr S Reed MP – Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
Mr B Sheerman MP – Chair, Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety