

PE1600/E

Lord Advocate Letter of 27 October 2016

Thank you for your letter of 29 September 2016 in connection with the Committee's consideration of the above petition, seeking my views on the petition and any concerns my office has about the effectiveness of speed awareness courses.

As you will be aware, at present prosecutors can, where appropriate, divert those reported by police under Section 3 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 for offences of careless driving to the National Driver Alertness Course, or in the case of motorcyclists, the equivalent RIDE (Rider Intervention Developing Experience) course.

I am willing to consider road traffic diversion schemes where these are shown to improve road safety, for example by positively influencing driver attitude and behaviour. In relation to speed awareness courses, I have considered the results of research into these courses. I will be interested to consider the findings of the Department for Transport's evaluation of speed awareness courses once that report is available.

Crown Office officials are now working closely with police and other road safety partners to identify and consider issues surrounding speed awareness courses.

I have, in fact, given authorisation for more detailed work to be undertaken and, without committing myself in advance of the completion of that work, I will be happy to consider a detailed proposal in due course.

Yours sincerely

W. JAMES WOLFFE QC