



Mr Jim Hanna,
Democratic Services Section,
Belfast City Council,
City Hall,
BELFAST
BT1 5GS

Your Ref:

Our Ref:

Date: 19th February 2015

Dear Mr Hanna,

Subject: Bus Lanes

Thank you for your correspondence to the Chief Constable relating to the proposal for traffic to be permitted to use bus lanes at times of emergency or chronic congestion. He has asked me to respond to you on his behalf.

The Road Traffic (NI) Order 1995 governs adherence to traffic signs and provides for an exemption in circumstances where a "Constable in uniform" directs traffic to proceed in a manner which is at variance with the sign. So where a police officer is on the ground and directs traffic to use the bus lane, then no motorist complying with the direction shall be guilty of an offence.

Alternatively, where a pre-notified event such as a public transport strike is to occur, the police have in the past agreed with DRD TransportNI, that enforcement of the bus lanes should be suspended to facilitate traffic flow. When this has occurred the public have been advised in advance via the BBC traffic bullet-ins and the NI Trafficwatch website.

What is not possible is an "ad hoc" remote widespread suspension of the operation of the bus lanes. Such an approach would be contrary to law, never mind all the practical implications of how to advise motorists when the suspension is imposed and then lifted.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'RF Leech'.

RF Leech
Inspector
Road Policing Development